TONI MORRISON'S SILENCE IN THE RUSSIAN CULTURAL AND TRANSLATIONAL CONTEXT

by

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STATEMENT OF THESIS APPROVAL

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ABSTRACT

The current research examines how Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* is being transformed under the impact of co-independent elements. First, it is an over-optimistic and ideologically motivated principle of translation dictated by the Soviet School of Translation. Second, it is a propagandistic agenda of original text's "devouring" and its later forced adaptation towards the desired representation established by the program of Social Realism. The analysis of the translation of the characters' names suggests the possible reasons for sometimes unclear and unexplainable translational strategy chosen by the translator. The question that the current research is trying to answer is how original textual elements lost or neglected in the translation could unveil underlying propagandistically or ideologically motivated mechanisms that make Toni Morrison silent.

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INTRODUCTION

For years the role of the translator has been questioned and reconsidered. Depending on the culture, the time period and the primary accepted tradition of translation, the place that a translator takes in the process of trans-locating a text from one language to another has shifted back and forth. At times the translator is a mere mediator and silent decoder of one linguistic/cultural inscription into another; at others he/she is a party that possesses a great deal of freedom and agency in the decision making process.[1] The more deliberate role of a translator allows scholars to look at the process of translation as a conscious act where every word and phrase translated reflects an existing ideology that stands behind the translating process itself. In other words, while working on any translation, a translator might imply or be under the influence of a certain historical and cultural (ideological) background. When you read translations published in an environment with a strong political and ideological component, it can seem that it is not the author of the original or even the translator who is speaking to you, but rather the whole system that underlies the translation and dictates its own rules and regulations about how the text must be read.

[1] See Apter, Bermann 2005, Biguenet, Corgold 2005, Cutter, Gallop, Gavronsky, Leighton, Malena, Spivak, Venuti 1992.

It is possible to trace changes to the original that occur in the process of translation by paying close attention to the linguistics of the original and the translation. The choice of the main strategy for the translation can determine the direction a translator decides to follow as well as suggest possible losses, aspects of the original that lie beyond the capability of the translator to communicate. The question thus becomes whether a translator's actions can be explained due to the difficulty of the original and differences between the translating and receiving cultures, or is it a purposeful and politically motivated act that forces the readers to follow the direction chosen by the translator (or ideological context standing behind him/her)?

This project analyzes the Russian translation of Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* published in the transitional historical period at the end of the Soviet era and the beginning of the new democratic Russia. We examine how the original work is impacted by its interaction with the tradition of Soviet translation and existing ideological control and censorship of that time. We show how this results in the loss of the underlying cultural and historical context of African American legacy that is interwoven via Morrison's use of language and style. The most obvious disconnect between the original and the translation lies on the level of naming: character and place names are introduced to the Russian readers as either fully or partially lost, and it disrupts Morrison's circularly enclosed narrative and leaves the target audience without any choice to develop other interpretations of their meanings. The translational fate of the names in *Song of Solomon* parallels the politically charged

agenda of a centralized authority that restricted the right to choose or have an alternative opinion.

I suppose that misbalance between the translated work and the original could be a result of the Soviet Union's proclaimed literary program where there was harsh control over any text written or published in the country including its theme, style, preface, etc. The texts that appeared on the literary market were fitted into the strict rules of the existing regime. Based on the ideological propaganda established in the Soviet Union in that period of time, literary works needed to emphasize a better lifestyle in communist society and reveal an unpleasant picture of the *horrible* life of people in capitalist countries. The most important goal of the Soviet program was to introduce to the Russian reader foreign authors who supported the socialist regime (Vid 343). It is worth mentioning that the role of the preface was significant in translated works as it could explain the desired meaning of the work to the Soviet reading public. The translation of *Song of Solomon* is no exception. The place of the preface was hard to dismiss as it was presented as a more important component of the narration than even the translator's contribution to the translation. Indeed, *Pesn' Solomona* (Russian title of the translated version of the novel) can be considered a "communist manifesto" (Vid 344) in which the main character's oppression under the capitalist regime is primary. This is reinforced by the diminished role of other details, such as names, of the original which are misleading in the translation. Even though, *Pesn' Solomona* appeared in the Soviet Union in the "thaw period" under L. Brezhnev's rule when the ideological control and censorship were noticeably weakened, the presence of ideology is still hard not to notice.

To fully explore the issue of name translation, we adopt a series of intermediate goals in order to develop the stated thesis. First, we present the main principles of translation studies broadly discussed in the Western circle of scholars and translators. We offer a brief overview of the most controversial and challenging issues that concern the study of translation in order to build the foundation for the main analysis of the chosen translated text. Next we pinpoint the distinguishing features of the Soviet tradition in translation. A comparison of how the Western tradition looks at the issues of translatability, fidelity and the role of a translator with the Soviet understanding of same notions reveals the most interesting and distinguishing features that determine the cross-Atlantic bridge of differences and similarities. We pay particular attention to the issue of ideology and authority in the Soviet tradition of translation. These two notions are impossible to imagine separately at least until the beginning of the 90s when glasnost and perestroika had slightly (but not entirely) changed the situation in the sphere of translation. We considered it necessary to examine the historical period when the translation was published (1982) in Russia and give a brief overview of the main events that took place in that particular year as we thought that it might explain the choice of certain translational strategies taken by E. Korotkova while working on the translation. Along with this, we did a general analysis of the translation but decided to look at this work from the metaphorical standpoint of a "cannibalistic act." We propose that the notion of "devouring" and textual "digestion" can more vividly describe how the translation behaves. We will also say which culture dominates and takes over in this interaction and suggest why this is happening. Finally, we offer a detailed analysis of

the translation of the novel's key names in an attempt to uncover underlying mechanisms that might have impeded more appropriate translation. In sum we are trying to establish a chain of interdependent components that influence the final product of translation and have a further effect on the reading audience. Starting from the general principles of translation, then proceeding to where Soviet translation stands vis-à-vis universally accepted principles, we move to the notion of ideology and censorship control that might have prefigured the main strategies chosen for E. Korotkova's translation of T. Morrison's *Song of Solomon*. And going further to the more detailed and concrete analysis of the work we unveil the underlying losses in names' translation and suggest the possible consequences of this loss.

In terms of theoretical approach, the analysis relies on a theoretical overview of works devoted to the problems of translation, the Soviet tradition of translation, the importance of names in T. Morrison's fiction, and the challenges that any translator can face while transmitting names from one culture into another. Also, the current research deals with a brief historical overview of a period of time when the translation was published. As for the general analysis of the translation itself, we adopt an unconventional method of looking at the translation through the metaphor of cannibalism as it might clearly show how the originality is absorbed. The translation of the names is done with the use of the lexical analysis of the original variants and their deep underlying lexical context that connects them to an outer cultural and historical space of the novel.

The work consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and a list of works cited in the paper. The first chapter explains why we selected for analysis Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*'s Russian translation and places this work in the field of the Soviet tradition of translation. It presents a general overview of the time during which the translation of *Song of Solomon* was published. Also, it presents the aspects of the translation work itself: its preface, the role of the translator, and the main translational principles adopted in the work through the prism of cannibalism. Next, we analyze some key principles of translation studies in general and their importance in the field of comparative literature for the translated work that we are working on. This text can be taken as a bright example of one of the literary works that stand in the most significant research goals for comparative literature. The second chapter unpacks the most interesting peculiarities of the main traditions of the Soviet school of translation and their influence on the quality and content of translated works in Soviet Russia. The third chapter unveils the mechanisms for translating key names in the novel, and gives possible suggestions for how the losses in their translation might influence the general effect created by the novel on the Russian readers.

Before moving to the main components of this work, we again revisit the main research questions that theoretically motivate the thesis: what are the main translational principles that deserve closer attention by a scholar or literary critic? How do ideology and censorship – key elements in the Soviet tradition of translation – influence the influx of the translated works into the Russian literary market? How does the preface to the translation prefigure the readers' expectations? How does the

translation in general answer to the very basic questions of translational ethics? And does it actually answer them? What can a detailed lexical analysis of the key names in the novel tell us about the underlying translational mechanisms preferred not only by the translator herself but by the Soviet system as well?

CHAPTER 1

TONI MORRISON'S *SONG OF SOLOMON* IN THE RUSSIAN DISCOURSE OF TRANSLATION

Translation (from Latin *trans* means "across", *latus* – "to carry") entails the carrying of a socio-cultural load from one national/cultural space into another. On its way to a different linguistic and cultural context, a translation faces certain challenges and even the impossibility of transporting the same amount of accurate and close information about the original. Moments of silence formed in the textuality between the source and target texts occur because of mistranslation or translator's inability to approximate the original meaning. These moments constitute "translational gaps" where the original meaning can be restored through a comparative analysis of the original and the translation. Therefore, these moments become very interesting for the study of comparative literature. Once a translated text crosses the linguistic and cultural borders of one culture it builds an invisible bridge between words and texts with another culture and establishes specific relationships between unequal national spaces. Comparative literature attempts to look at the process of translation beyond the textual frame created by the translator by means of comparing different textual formations and analyzing the established juxtaposition of "economies of knowledge, social relations, power and especially art

that makes literature possible" (Green 123). Comparative literature investigates the "cultural and epistemological otherness" (Bermann 2009, 433) carried by translation, asking if this "otherness" is keeping silence and veils certain elements of the original. Comparative literature decentralizes the translational zone by putting these unspoken moments at the center and by exploring the possible reasons for their absence or misrepresentation in translation. The silence in translation can be the result of the inescapable inequality of semantics between two different languages and cultures; or this silence can be forced and manipulated by exterior political and ideological forces that underlie and influence the process of translation. Translations that appear in transitional historical periods and between controversially contrasting ideologies are highly interesting for investigation. First, such juxtapositions make it possible to analyze and compare different traditions of translation. Second, this can uncover the underlying influx of ideas and thoughts that could have influenced the decisions made in the process of translation and shape the desired interpretation of the original work.

The Russian translation of Toni Morrison's novel *Song of Solomon* can offer fertile ground in this regard. First, the translated work was published in a transitory period in Soviet Russia, namely right at the end of the Soviet era, a period of a significant change in the political and social life of the country. Also, the themes that Morrison focuses on might have been used to form a conceptually clear propaganda directed against capitalistic regimes of the West. By considering this specific text we can explore how the main principles of translation in general and the peculiarities of Soviet translation in particular could be used to establish this propagandistic agenda,

specifically due to the silent moments left by the translator when compared to the textual structure of the original.

The scope of the book's themes, the issues it addresses, the style and mysticism of Morrison's language along with the tone and musicality of the text all suggest translation challenges. Having read the original, and then the Russian translation, I was intrigued by how my interpretation of the original was different from the impression that I got from the translation of the novel. I decided to launch a research project that would touch upon translation studies in general and look at how the translation of this particular novel fits into the Russian linguistic and cultural context of its time. My analysis of the translation consists of a brief review of the time when the translation was published; an overview of the translation's structural elements: preface and information about the translator; a critical analysis of the translation via the metaphor of 'cannibalism' (mainly through the metaphors of "devouring" and "absorbing" of the original), along with tackling the main principles of translation broadly discussed in the Western tradition of translation studies; and, finally, a detailed analysis of translation of the key names of the novel. The primary focus on the naming issue was chosen due to Morrison's artistic ability to seal the characters' identities, along with the underlying cultural and historical context, in an inward textuality of names.

Toni Morrison is the author of a series of novels that can be justly called slavery legacy: *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula*, *Tar Baby*, *Beloved*, *Jazz* and *Song of Solomon*. *Song of Solomon* won the 1978 National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction which put T. Morrison at one of the highest ranks of the American literary tradition and in

the primary lists for reading in the literature classes not only in North America but around the world. As for *Pesn Solomona* – the only Russian translation of T. Morrison's *Song of Solomon* – it was the first T. Morrison novel translated into Russian. It appeared in 1982. Summarizing the key events of that year, it is not surprising that this is when this particular work appeared in Russian translation. The year 1982 was marked by the death of two of the most influential Soviet political leaders of the preceding two decades: Michael Suslov, second at the Kremlin (after Leonid Brezhnev), who was a key ideological leader of the Soviet Union. He was known as "grey eminence" of the Soviet Union and was a follower of Stalin's and Khrushchev's political agendas. He died at the beginning of 1982. At the end of 1982 the Soviet people lost Leonid Brezhnev, one of its most stable political leaders, who had been in power for 18 years. Brezhnev was responsible for keeping the political and economic situation in the Soviet Union stable. He was also known for proclaiming a "thaw period" in the Soviet Union which was characterized by a weakening of censorship and state control. Leonid Brezhnev died at the age of seventy-six.

The social life of the Soviet Union of that period was known for a rising fashion for everything that could be associated with the West: knowledge of English became a necessity and an indicator of high status; the Russian language began to be infiltrated by numerous English words. It was considered very stylish and modern to say *шузы* (shuzy) for shoes or *пипл* (pipl) for people. This rising interest in and curiosity about everything Western can be connected to the exoticism of the West and the lack of information about the world outside the Soviet Union. This lack of

knowledge was not surprising as at that time there was only one Soviet-wide TV channel accessible in all parts of the Union. And even the information that reached the Soviet people was highly filtered and censored by the government.

However, in the field of foreign literature, there was a completely different situation in the time when the translation of *Song of Solomon* appeared on the bookshelves of the Soviet stores. The literary world managed to stay somehow untouched by harsh criticism and ideological control. The intensive flow of foreign literature signaled the Soviet readers' high interest in how people lived in other parts of the world. Foreign literature was even more popular than the Soviet titles. It was not just modern it was prestigious if you read Ray Bradbury or James Joyce. The publishing house *Foreign Literature* (*Inostrannaya Literatura*) achieved autonomous status and began to publish a series of translated works from around the globe. However, it is valid to question whether these published works were absolutely free from ideological control. Even though foreign thoughts and ideas penetrated the Russian literary world, it remains uncertain how the choice of authors, titles and themes to be translated and published was determined by the government. In other words, there was a vivid binary between the rising taste for everything foreign (especially Western) and the still functioning harsh criticism of imperialism, capitalism and individualism from the ideologically charged state. So, Brezhnev's rule or the "thaw period" is an opportunity to see how people were, on the one hand, still under ideological control, and, on the other, striving to get knowledge about the other world, so exotic and unknown to them.

The translation of T. Morrison's *Song of Solomon* by E. Korotkova and published by one of the most famous publishing houses of the Soviet times – "Progress" – was not an exception to many other translated works being published in the Soviet Union in that time. On the one hand, this work was that little door that got opened for curious Soviet readers who were eager to know more about how Americans live, and, on the other hand, it was a carefully chosen title for translation with a very clear propagandistic purpose, namely to level harsh criticism at the bourgeoisie and capitalistic system.

What exactly in *Song of Solomon* could interest the Western reading public? We can just suppose that it is because T. Morrison's work is "beautiful, funny, enormously moving, enchanting, laden with cunningly wrought mysteries. It is the best novel of the black experience in America since *Invisible Man*" (Morrison 1987, 1). Or maybe because it is a novel about the journey of the main character – Macon "Milkman" Dead III – back to his roots, ancestry and heritage. This novel is about the memory and how it is important to preserve ties (relationship, family, community ties). The novel is about identity, the search of your true identity that was probably lost or forgotten due to the circumstances of time. In other words, T. Morrison explores in her novel the notion of self-identity along with cultural and ancestry identity; the search for self and family roots that lead to the history of the African legacy in the American society. Along with this, T. Morrison's complex thematic structure embedded in a mysterious and enigmatic style of writing and the underlying context of cultural and historical background make reading, let alone translating, her works very challenging and complicated.

The question is what interested the Russian reading public of those times when they were first introduced to T. Morrison's work – her style, language, themes or something else that the Russian translation *helped* to reveal to the Russian audience?

Certainly, it is difficult to give a definitive answer to this question but we consider it important to examine the preface to the translation written by Nikolay Anastas'ev, a Russian literary critic and professor at the Moscow State University, whose expertise is American prose of the twentieth century. The eight-page preface functions, on the one hand, as a helpful guide to T. Morrison's works and their contribution to American literature of the 60-70s. On the other hand, through his focus on the main themes of the *Song of Solomon*, Anastas'ev suggests to the Soviet readers which part of the subject matter *must* be more appealing – the oppression and fading of individuality in bourgeois society; the struggle of an individual in a society where the values and morals of a community have been neglected. Therefore, behind the detailed critical analysis of the novel and the main issues touched on by the author, there is a clear propagandistic agenda designed to rouse Soviet readers to compassion for the fate of the "negro community" suffering under the oppression of the bourgeois community.

It is worth mentioning that Anstas'ev points out that despite T. Morrison's attempt to depict the individual's search for self and desire to acquire "self" by restoring the national conscious and historical roots of the African community in the American society, Morrison fails to complete the whole picture of an individual by the end of the novel, leaving the question stated in the beginning of the novel open.

Anastas'ev attributes this to the impossibility for an individual to do so in a corrupt capitalistic environment that bought human values and morals and traded them for personal freedom and family ties. Such a pessimistic vision of an American novel of that time period is highly emphasized by the critic and along with the key concepts of the "oppression," "isolation," "capitalistic slavery" and "loss of community" he manages to establish a clear propagandistic background for the novel's probable future interpretation and acceptance.

Before analyzing the translation in detail, it is necessary to provide a general overview of the work and categorize the main strategies of translation used by E. Korotkova and how they might have influenced the decision making process in accomplishing the translation. We also considered it necessary to situate the translator herself, her biography and list of translated works. Along with this, it is crucial to present the publishing house *Progress* that published this translation as this too can shed light on the process, methods and strategies of translation used for working on this novel.

Finding out anything about the translator E. Korotkova proved virtually impossible. After several fruitless attempts to contact the publishing house for information about translators who worked there during that period of time, we turned to social networks and websites devoted to literature translated into Russian. The only information that we managed to find is the titles of some other works translated by this translator. No biographical information or other references were found. What is more, E. Korotkova remained unknown to us as we could not decipher even her full name. We could find out her full name neither in the translation itself nor in any

other sources. She remains a single initial and a surname. Though it is a well known fact that Russians are very sensitive about not only their first but also their middle names – patronymics. The use of both demonstrates authority, politeness and subordination in interpersonal interactions. Thus, it is a mystery that E. Korotkova's full name is irretrievable and that she does not possess middle initials. This lack curiously mirrors our analysis of the translation of the names of the novel where we are again faced with many unsolved puzzles and unanswered questions.

It seems likely that the name of a publishing house and its status in the world of literature was far more important than the translator, who could be viewed as a mere mediator between the original and its translation. Support for this might be the lack of any commentary from E. Korotkova concerning her work and the possible challenges and difficulties that she came across while accomplishing her work. The only literary criticism that we have is the eight-page preface made by a literary critic that gave us more than just an introduction into T. Morrison's works, it readied the reader for the themes and ideas to be taken into more serious consideration.

The publishing house – *Progress* – that issued the translation, is well-known as a central publishing house of the State Committee for the Ministers' Assembly working on the publishing house's issues, printing industry and book sales. It published Soviet literature mainly in the field of humanities (first of all ideological), in foreign languages and also translated literature in Russian. The fact that it mainly focused on literature of an ideological nature is important to take into consideration. In light of this, the choice of *Song of Solomon* was not an accidental matter; especially in that period of time it must have fit the main ideological agenda that this

publishing house was following. So, what we have is very little information about the translator and a publishing house that stood for the propagandistic intentions of the literature that they promoted. We will leave these observations for later discussions as they will be needed in making conclusions, and turn now to translation itself to make a basic analysis of the work. Before doing so, we address main principles of translation mainly discussed in the Western tradition as they will provide the necessary background for our analysis of the peculiarities and differences of the Soviet School of translation within which the translation of Morrison's *Song of Solomon* appeared.

1.1 Tasks and Challenges of Translation in the Realm of Comparative Literature

In this chapter we present those issues of translation that reveal the labor and challenges of this complicated process. We also pinpoint certain peculiarities that make translation a unique form of art capable of creating an unprecedented kind of writing that differs from any other form of artistic expression. Translation establishes a continuous dialog between source and target cultures with underlying currents of political and social interconnections. We begin by describing the mode in which translation stands in a relationship with the field of comparative literature and then move to specific notions of strategy of translation, degree of fidelity/faithful lness to the original, concept of untranslatability and some other notions that are involved in the complicated and challenging process of translating a text from one language into another.

In the current global world, translation stands in close relationship with comparative literature, a discipline that has had to make a radical *linguistic turn*, and pay more attention to the languages and ethics of their "traveling" from one cultural dimension into another. Indeed a significant number of canonical texts are being translated into different languages resulting in an erosion of the boundaries between contrasting cultures. However, the question remains: does translation really transfer the original message and, if not, what is lost in translation? To answer this question, it is important first to look at the nature of these existing relationships between translation and comparative literature, and to consider the concept of "translation" itself, specifically the task of communicating a foreign component into a different *national* and *cultural* context.

Translation operates in the field of comparison: it compares not-related languages. Comparative literature claims to follow translation's model by ensuring the relationships of *fidelity* between the source and target text (Corngold 2000, 139). In other words, the degree of fidelity of the translated text to its original version is measured in accordance to how faithful the translation can be even after modifications of original form and content. However, looking at the notion of comparison itself, comparative literature can take a completely different perspective and look at not how the translation is reflecting the original, but at what is lost in translation for the sake of translation itself (Corngold 2000). By counting these "favorable losses" comparative literature is playing the role of a silent observer – or as Corngold calls it the nontransparent role in the literary continuum – that allows comparative literature to stay behind any language and *sound* (or make visible) those

moments that create this comparison/contrast between different literary/cultural/linguistic zones. In the context of translation, the translator can also play the double role of, first, the silent observer who analyzes and studies the original and, then, the role of an active reproducer of the foreign in a different linguistic-cultural context. If a literary critic makes the notion of comparison itself visible in the process of such a textual/cultural exchange, a translator marks the foreignness and thinks of how to introduce it to a different culture. Taking into consideration the difficulty of the mission that these two parties are fulfilling, it is worth mentioning that the strength of the ties established between two different cultures depends on the result of this task.

It is here that comparative literature and translation share a common zone of confluence: in order for comparative literature to decide where the contrast is born and how it is depicted by translation, it must identify if an analyzed work is a successful translation or a failure. What is the main task for translators: to transfer one language into another or to transport one culture into a different socio-cultural dimension? What should be translated and how? These are some of the questions that the field of comparative literature has been trying to answer since the role of translation was recognized as a crucial one in establishing relationships of mutual understanding between different cultures. Gayatri Spivak considers that the main function of translation is "the irreducible work of translation, not from language to language but from body of ethical semiosis, that incessant shuttle that is life" (Spivak 67). Spivak's "planetary" vision of the process suggests it is worth thinking about the way translations circulate in the world and elicit responses and the way they activate

the common imagination in an attempt to create new pictures of reality. By penetrating the native culture, translation can shake cultural identities and create the basis for completely new literary creations that have to undergo the influence of foreignness and successfully domesticate the ideas brought from a different cultural dimension. As a result, translation can put the author's creation in danger by subverting and distorting the originality of the target text through simplifying and essentializing the original text's intended motifs.

Obviously, comparative literature and translation can be accomplished only through the prism of close reading and careful interpretations. "And zone" relationships create the mutual collaboration in which foreign values, thoughts and ideas can be translated with respect for the underlying cultural and historical context. "And" connects interdisciplinary comparative literature and the crucial field of translation at many points that include words, practices or collaboration in translation. Translation is viewed on a wider political and philosophical scale in comparative literature. Thus, translation is considered through the focus on language, specifically through the notions of polylinguistic and polycultural formations usually with a strange or unknown or foreign component that must be interpreted or revealed in a different linguistic-cultural dimension in an appropriate fashion. Therefore, a good translation can be accomplished only with "deep linguistic and cultural knowledge, a keen sense of the historical context of each word and phrase, is our best pro logue to translation" (Spivak 70). According to Spivak, attaining this knowledge about a source text is possible only through a careful and "close reading" of the original. In other words, translation might misguide a reader and cause the

"death" of an original message as an attentive reading of an original can uncover possible "lost" moments in a translated work. Close reading of the original here "prevents us from making a too-quick conclusion" which might, it its turn, cause the comprehensibility based on the hidden behind-the-lines ideology (Gallop 217). Thus, following Spivak's argument, the lack of direct access to the original and the opportunity to make a comparison can result in any meaning being ideologically conditioned and politically charged, or as Apter mentions: any translation, therefore, is defined with a continuous connection in-between political power and aesthetics (Apter).

The above argument raises questions about the notion of a translation's fidelity to the original. If translation is interpreted as mere linguistic fidelity to the original text's specificity, then translation will always be impossible, because it is held between two linguistic, cultural and discursive domains of communication that will always remain unequal. However, one of the benefits of comparative literature's collaboration with translation is that the former made it possible to look at the process of translation as the creation of a new writing project. By doing this, translation is open to a range of possibilities for readers' interpretations which are made by constant "weighing words in their cultural contexts, a negotiation of meanings and a finding of comparable terms and contests in a language other than an original" (Bermann 2005, 442). Therefore, a translator is always in-between zones where he/she participates in an ongoing dialogue with the past and the present, the distant and the immediate image from the text. A translator fulfills the role of a creator who "starts to imagine a text from a different language, other cultures, other

artists, and other peoples, with the perils and aspirations they present" (Bermann 2005, 443).

The translator's perennial existence in an "in-between" or intermediate zone means he/she embraces changes happening in the socio-cultural and political discourses of both source and target cultures. Due to the fact that translated works occupy a particular position within a target literary corpus, translation certainly influences the traditional repertoire, literary norms and tendencies, and may take an active role in their shaping. In discussing translation's specific status within a target literature, Itamar Even-Zohar claims that translated literature is not only an integral system within any literary polysystem, but a most active system within it (Venuti 2005). According to Even-Zohar, translated works not only occupy a certain position (central, periphery or both) in relation to literature, but also actively participate in the formation or changing of "home" literary norms and traditions. When translated works stand in the center, they play the role of a "major channel" through which the target literature absorbs new repertoire, new (poetic) language and compositional patterns. When translated works stand on the periphery, they provide "secondary models" and "becomes a major factor for conservatism" (Venuti 2005, 202). In other words, new ideas, trends and moods brought by translation preserve and reinforce the importance of traditional literary taste. Whether translated works position themselves in the center or in the periphery of the main literary space might be caused by differences between foreign and target cultures that were brought from outside by means of the translations themselves. Therefore, translated works can behave differently on foreign soil: either violating domestic literary traditions or

playing the role of a minor influence or even rejection. Even-Zohar's idea about the systematic nature of literature, where translated works also represent an active literary system, suggests a unique status for translation and the role of translators in the cultural and literary discourse.

When translated work appears in a foreign literary space, there are certain things that start happening on the established frontier zone between the original and the target texts. Marthe J. Cutter in her work *Lost and Found in Translation* raises questions about the status and the role that the source text plays in this process of "transcoding, switching" from one linguistic and cultural dimension to a foreign soil. What is lost and what is found at the point when we see how languages and cultures "mesh, mingle, and re-create themselves in a border zone or even border dance of linguistic and cultural free fall"? (Cutter 1). In fact, if we look at the process of translation from this perspective, we see that it does not merely mean the literal *trans-lation* of one set of linguistic units into another set. Obviously, this difficult and sometimes very challenging process can cause the transformation of the "racial, generational, and cultural identities" that make a process of translation a multifaceted activity that touches upon various modes of trans/inter and intra linguistic/cultural/national transferences from one culture to another (Cutter 2). Obviously, the role of a translator in this process is hard to overestimate. The translator possesses the ability to create this synthesis between cultures, a synthesis that sparkles with distinguishing peculiarity and uniqueness from other forms of linguistic and cultural expression. This idea again reinforces the singular position that translation occupies in the socio-cultural arena.

Cutter's ideas about the hybrid nature of translation and its special place in the literary and cultural discourse pinpoint the necessity and importance of identifying the main challenges and controversial matters that question the possibility of transporting that which is linguistically embedded in the original text's "spirit" into a foreign mode of understanding. Obviously, the most difficult thing is to maintain a healthy balance between two extreme directions that a translator can choose to follow: foreignization or domestication of the original message. A well-known idea expressed by Friedrich Schleiermacher that "either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader toward him. Or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author toward him" is still highly pertinent when we talk about how a translation can achieve the desired accuracy or equivalence (Venuti 2005, 49).

What are the consequences of using one of the above mentioned strategies? And what are the reasons for using one of them? These are crucial questions when we talk about the juxtaposition of translation and culture. In the case when a translator (following an existing tendency of introducing a foreign literary work into a national space) decides to domesticate a message by putting it closer to the domestic literary discourse, the result can be an inevitable loss of the foreign element, and therefore a misrepresentation of the source culture. However, this work might also enjoy incredible popularity as its representation will perfectly match "home" literary tradition, satisfy its needs and demands, and be consistent with its genre and topic requirements. In other words, a domesticated translated work will lose a foreign component, but gain a domestic popularity. On the other hand, if a

translator decides to stay loyal to a source text, and tries to transport not only the content of an original but also trans-code the foreign form (in the case of poetry translation), then these kinds of translated works will tend to stand on the periphery of the domestic literary system. They will keep their traditionalism by resisting domestication towards a mainstream literary form. By losing the possibility of occupying a central position in "home" literary circles, translated works of this kind gain a status of a clear and vivid representation of a foreign language system and culture which can be interesting in the context of literary transnationalism, but such works are less likely to enjoy mainstream popularity.

Depending on the chosen strategy, a translator faces the issue of what should or can be translated and what should or can be omitted as an unnecessary element of transcoding a main message; he/she is always resolving the issue of possible (un)translatability in the process of translation. This tricky and controversial problem is the blind spot in the theory and practice of translation. It is interesting to see what impact the refusal to translate has on the overall perception of the original text by foreign readers. It is also worth considering how the issue of untranslatability influences the "afterlife" of the original and if it contributes to or disrupts the translation's acceptance in the world literary and cultural arena of inter-linguistic/cultural/ethnic/political cooperation. For Cutter, the refusal to translate means the denial to transport the initial ethnic component that consequently creates a multicultural and multilinguistic identity (Cutter 6). Also, Cutter claims that untranslatability signals the attempt to transgress "the intercultural and interlingual demands that translation entails" which indeed brings different cultures and

languages together but instead of "harmonizing" it reinforces and uncovers their polarities (Cutter 7). This issue is interesting to ponder when considering translation between completely different cultures, cultures that stand on polar points of the cultural, historical and political spectrum.

The overarching question is whether target readers actually perceive an accurate picture of the text's foreign reality. Do they really feel the spirit of the original in cases when some parts of a source text have been distorted or left behind due to attempts by the translator to find the most "relevant" variant? And, what is even more interesting is to surmise the reasons for this refusal to translate. Is a translator's decision of what to translate always ideologically or politically charged? Is it the ideological context, which lies beyond the politics of translation itself, which determines what, how and why anything is translated? A translation's role in the formation of the geopolitical mood is enormous: translation helps to construct the source national identity, with all its underlying essential components, in the target foreign culture. Moreover, an ideological component can play a very decisive role in what can/cannot or should/should not be translated. In other words, the issue of selection and choice of a certain text for translation can be crucial in shaping a translational discourse in the target culture. Also, the tendency for a strategy of translation can sometimes be dictated by the ideological mindset of the country where a literary work is to be introduced. What is at issue here is the purposeful establishment of a desired representation of a foreign culture, one that can be used for specific ideological goals. Thus, translation possesses an ability to resituate the subject in the world and in history, to "render self-knowledge foreign to itself," to

take the target readers out of the comfort zone of national space or cause "national narcissism" (qtd. in Apter 240).

Given the complex nature of translation, the role of a translator in this process is not just challenging, but sometimes even dangerous. For they (translators) are to capture the original text's meaning that lies beyond the lines in two "intertexual and extratextual worlds" (Cutter 17) and feel the target audience's values and needs. Therefore a translation performs the role of a bridge between two cultures that connects ideas, ideologies and mentalities. In other words, the original text transmigrates by means of translation between two texts/cultures and unites them on the thematic and lexical level. Spivak suggests that "the task of the translator is to facilitate this love between the original and its shadow, a love that permits fraying, holds the agency of the translator and the demands of her imagined or actual audience at bay" (qtd. in Apter 132).

By acting as a mediator between different cultural and ideological dimensions, translation uncovers existing underlying tensions, and sometimes translation is capable of reconfiguring these power relationships in a way that is favorable for one or the other side. Therefore, it is not surprising that translation is foregrounded in building the corpus of an intercultural and interlinguistic entity that resettles tongues and re-encodes identities. Indeed, sometimes the relationship between an author and a translator is viewed as a constant struggle for the right to occupy a certain space in intertextuality between the originally created message and the translated text. Is a translation a mere reproduction of an original that does not itself establish or create anything new, or is it a new form of hybridity that after

"consuming" or "absorbing" an original idea comes up with a new form of textual unity whose elements are directed towards a target culture?

How then does a translation satisfy the criteria of a successful work, one that would take into account the "source text" with its underlying original world and language(s) and, then re-create this source text in a way that it will accommodate a new reality (the "target" world and culture) (Cutter 7)? Where are the boundaries of translatability, if indeed there are any? What linguistic and thematic elements are necessary to translate into a foreign soil to 'bring blood to ghosts'? (Venuti 2005, 130). A translator is challenged by a conundrum: is it necessary to transcode the 'spirit' of an original to a target culture or keep linguistic charge of an original? The more polarized the cultures are, the more complicated this task is.

Since 1990, due to the rise of social and cultural studies, the study of translation has changed its mainstream goal – from elements and participants of an actual process to the effects and consequences of translation. The dialogism established by a translation between different linguistic and cultural spaces has been studied from the perspective of translation as a "third liminal (literal) space" where a new hybrid literary form is celebrated. This form of writing is distinguished by a certain degree of fidelity to the source culture and its direction towards a target culture with an implicit power. Due to the broader scope of such research questions, translation started being investigated from the perspective of "social effects of translation and their ethical and political consequences" in linguistic and socio-cultural perspectives (Venuti 2005, 323). Obviously, scholars in translation shifted their interest from what is an actual goal or purpose of translation to what the

functions or consequences of a translation process are. In other words, the question of what translation does in a linguistic-socio-historic-cultural dimension made the list of topic research questions.

Regarding the linguistic angle, scholars began to be interested in translation not just as a process of transmitting one message from a foreign language to a foreign soil but as a complex phenomenon that can be analyzed from a variety of view points, depending on the perspectives of the linguistic subdiscipline. Thus, in the field of cognitive linguistics, translation is studied as a mental activity and researchers are interested in the processes activated in a translator's brain while a translation is being completed. The research focuses on what the conceptual fields of the translational discourse are and how they are activated during the mental cognitive process of translating a text from one language into another. Another research approach, that also draws on the cognitive component of the translation process, is the study of grammatical categories and the way they can be "studied in relation to a particular social issue" (Venuti 2005, 333). This interest in how textual grammar can influence the perception of a translated text in a receptive culture is a clear consequence of a shift of literary criticism towards the study of the textual mechanisms that translators use to create a desirable effect on a target audience.

Along with the great interest of scholars of translation in alliance with cultural studies, translation was also viewed in the context of different linguistic environments (cognitive linguistic, pragmalinguistics, sociolinguistics and others.) Kwame Anthony Appie's essay published in Lawrence Venuti's collection of works focuses on the issue of translation via the terms of pragmalinguistics. According to

his theory, translation expands the limits of conversational maxims and conversational implications applied to the theory of speech acts and it challenges a transposition of literary implication of a meaning embedded in a source text which questions the possibility of accomplishing a literary translation per se. Kwame proposes accomplishing a "thick" translation, one that requires a deep knowledge/understanding of the context (cultural, historical, etc.) accompanying an original (qtd. in Venuti 2005, 301). In other words, as it is impossible to transfer the original author's intentions onto a foreign soil, a thick translation might help to establish a tight bond with linguistic and cultural discourses of the original to provide new ways of meaning interpretation in a target culture. However, there is a question of how politicized this proposed method of translation can be.

Jacques Derrida's attempt to situate the concept of translation in post-structural discourse where a definition of 'the best' and 'the worst' translation is deconstructed is (certainly) worth consideration. "Nothing is translatable and nothing is untranslatable" (qtd. in Venuti 2005, 427) – is how Derrida explains translation's in-between position in the literary domain of meaning interpretation, and a translation seems relevant (suitable, adjustable, fitting) only in the context of an institution that uses it as a tool for "legal interdiction, economic sanction, and political repression" (432). Along with an underlying political motive for translation, Derrida proposed three consequent steps that any translation must make in order to achieve the status of a recognizable work: preserving, suppressing and elevation. By preserving, Derrida means keeping foreign elements of a source text in translation, by suppressing (recognizing the impossibility of transmitting foreign components

into a target culture due to existing linguist and cultural differences between two texts), and by elevating (the ability of a translated work to "elevate" from both source and target text into a third dimension where translation can attain a new life, "afterlife").

This brief overview of translation's main principles shows how the retrospective from which translation is seen had changed: the range of disciplinary areas and angles from which the process and participants of translation can be studied have increased along with the changing direction of literary criticism. Even though the issues of fidelity and equivalence along with the notions of translatability and the preferable strategy of translation still remain the focus of attention, the perspective that takes translation as a mechanism of socio-cultural manipulation and political regulation seems fruitful to consider as well.

In this segment the different aspects of translational discourse have been reviewed: the complex and sometimes controversial relationships between a source and target text; the notion of fidelity and inevitable "unfaithfulness" of translation to the original; the concept of untranslatability and its influence on an original text's representation and the receptive culture's reaction. We observed also how the approach to translation studies changed after 1990, moving in the direction of the effects that translation has when it stands "in-between" different cultural, historical and political discourses. Translation achieved the status not only of a process of transcoding of ideas and themes from one language into another, but also the role of a politically and ideologically charged channel through which the national identity is formed or may be distorted, how power relationships between two contrasting

cultures participating in a process of translation are built and how translation unnoticeably brings social changes.

CHAPTER 2

THE SOVIET TRANSLATIONAL CONTEXT

In the previous chapter we surveyed the main issues of translation studies as broadly discussed in the Western tradition of literary criticism. The challenges of fidelity, equivalence and translatability were and still are at the center of almost every discussion in the translation critics' circles. In this chapter we look at how the tradition of translation has been developed in the historically, culturally and politically different national space of Soviet Russia. This will allow us to highlight the most interesting issues of Soviet translation. We are not going to discuss in detail the history and development of the translation studies establishment in Russia, but rather focus on the most interesting moments, those that shaped the Soviet tradition of translation and that remained highly influential in the literary world of Russia even after glasnost and perestroika.

First, it is important to mention that Soviet translation and the word "ideological" are inextricably linked. However, as Lauren Leighton notes, this word does not "imply *the* ideology" in its initial meaning (Leighton 10). In the Soviet tradition of translation the notion of ideology is directly referred to a culture "historically inclined to authority," that is "receptive to the optimistic assumption that all problems have solutions from a single orientation, one of any two opinions is

wrong, and theory tied to practice offers intellectual stability" (Leighton 14). In other words, the authoritative nature of Soviet translation is distinguished by its unflagging optimism and confidence that any problem occurring in the process of transmitting one language/culture to another linguistic/cultural/national dimension can be solved due to the high professionalism and artistry of a translator, and by the boundless opportunities of the Russian language.

The omnipotence and decisiveness that were inherent in the Soviet tradition of translation have always been dictated by ideological control and censorship. There is only one factor that was different in earlier and later periods of the Soviet times – the intensity of this control. The ideological influence on the sphere of translation mainly depended on the state of relations between the Soviet Union and the West. As Mirra Ginsburg states in her article about the politics of translation in Russia:

> there has been a constant interplay of arrogance and sense of inferiority, admiration and hate, attraction and fear: constant attempts to compare and compete, and a constant struggle between those who would turn West and bring the West home and those who would turn inward and develop Russia's own uniqueness, often preached with a mystical sense of a messianic mission (Ginsburg 351).

In other words, the choice of works for translation, their number and quality have been a mirror of the direction of the relationship with the West. If in the time of repression and harsh dictatorship (1917-1950) "the author of a translation [was] not a humble screw in the machinery, he [was] the machinery itself" (Baer 148); in the times of glasnost, due to the decentralization of the state, there was an emergence of "quasi-private" (cooperative) publishing houses that lacked not only strict censorship but even reviews of the translated works. Such loose control resulted in a situation where numerous translations of Western European and American bestsellers filled

the shelves of the Russian bookstores and, even though they became excellent money-makers for publishing houses, they certainly lacked the equivalence to the original works as the real "taste" of the original in many cases was lost (Leighton 39).

It is also important to mention that along with these newly formed cooperatives, there was still a well-organized mechanism of state censorship that kept operating in the state publishing houses. As both Leighton and Friedberg mention, there was evidence of constant ideological control even after glasnost and perestroika took hold. Leighton argues that censorship was actually noticed to be even lighter "in some of the better years before glasnost" and after the revolution (Leighton 14). And Friedberg adds that: "very few readers [in the time of glasnost and perestroika] were aware that Soviet translations of Western writing were routinely censored" (Friedberg 7). In other words, it is difficult to decide how ideological control impacted literary translation and how intensive its influence was in different periods of Soviet times mainly due to the absence of reliable figures and facts. One way to address this issue is through a comparative analysis of the most popular translated works in different periods of time against their originals, and a study of the effects they had on the Soviet society. As this is not the main goal of the current research we will leave this question open for possible further investigation.

Despite the fact that literary translation in Soviet Russia was always subject to censorship and state control, translation remained a very important part of establishing a Russian literary tradition. Indeed, in the 1970s, almost seventy per cent of all titles printed in the Soviet Union were translations (Friedberg 5). Friedberg

names the possible reasons why translations occupied such a predominant share of the market in those times. He suggests that it might be in a "response to the insufficient of unsatisfactory domestic literary production" (Friedberg 2) or just natural curiosity to know about a foreign way of life and customs because of the forced isolation of Russia from the rest of the world, especially in the Soviet period. It is important to mention that even though translated works were a major part of the literary production in those times the works were very carefully selected as they still needed to serve the propagandistic function of elevation of Soviet principles over Western ones. A Soviet translator was responsible for shaping a literary canon of world literature and an accurate or undesirable rendition of a work might cause noticeable change not only in perception of the foreign culture of them but also in domestic literary development.

Scholars note the noticeable advantages of the national-cultural conditions in which Soviet translation developed. First of all, the Soviet tradition of translation is marked by its primary attention to the theory of translation and its implementation of this theory. Thanks to such careful attention to the theoretic-practical bond of translation, "Soviet translators were for many long years ahead of others in the creation of a vocabulary of criticism, in methods of translation analysis, and in knowledge of the history of translation" (Leighton 15). In other words, Soviet translators were more versed in aspects of the main principles of translation than their colleagues in the West. Thus, for example, Leighton notes that Soviet translators did not have any confusion between notions of "fidelity," "accuracy" and "precision" as the concepts related to these terms were considered in the Soviet

school as antonymical. Or, for example, the sore point of translatability did not bother Soviet translators that much as they appealed to a notion of language barrier that, according to their ideological optimism was something they developed ways to overcome. Therefore, by establishing a stable theoretical structure of translation, Soviet translators equipped themselves with the necessary vocabulary to counter critics' attacks and those of amateurish reviewers. Thus, Soviet translators did not have "to put up with the banality of so much of our [Western] translation criticism: "it reads smoothly," "it sounds like the original," or even worse, "silence" (Leighton 15). However, it is very hard to say if it is good or bad when translation is immune in such a way to critics' interference. On the one hand, a solid theoretical apparatus makes translation studies stronger in the literary arena where translators can act more freely and decisively in their work. However, at the same time, the lack of free access for critics isolates the world of translated works from the outside influence of literary criticism, reducing translation to an independent mechanism that functions by itself without the possibility of the full-valued review and analysis that can sometimes be crucial in the appropriate representation of a foreign work to the Russian public.

The establishment of the Soviet School of translation was one result of the influential role of translation studies in Soviet Russia. First, it was

> a main ingredient of the nationalities policy introduced by Lenin and continued, despite obvious difficulties, as the chief means of holding so many different nationalities into a single Union. The official base of the school is its status as the Soviet of Artistic Translation, attached to the Directorate of the Union of Soviet writers and affiliated with the International Federation of Translators (FIT) (Leighton 16).

Such a serious institution enjoyed incredible power over training institutes, translation journals, collection of studies and individually authored books and even media – all channels through which Soviet translators got their educational and professional experience. However, ideology and censorship stood over the power possessed by the Soviet School of translation. And, despite the fact that ideology was not rigidly applied and later on even weakened, it was not eliminated as a whole even in the times of glasnost and proclaimed freedom of speech (Leighton 16). Although translated works were often censored and edited to meet "indigenous expectations," poorly done translations could make it into print despite an existing system of criticism and censorship. Many of these translations suffered from a "wordy" approach to translation which violated the originality of the source text and spoiled the whole image of the translated works on the literary market. In other words, there is a dual nature of the translational discourse in Soviet Russia where, on one hand, translators have been under the pressure of censorship and state control along with a stable theoretical foundation established by the Soviet School of Translation. And, on the other hand, there was a narrow uncontrolled flow of translated works published without very strict ideological pressure and without adequate critical review. The width of this channel increased significantly after glasnost when Soviet publishing houses and journals got unprecedented autonomy. It was the time when the foreign works that had been rejected before started appearing in response to the demands of reading public and current literary tradition.

It is also crucial to note that translation in the Soviet Union has always been equated with art. One consequence of this stance is that the Soviet tradition of

translation is the result of significant changes and modifications in terms of the main principles and the "convergence of thought and practice of literary translation has reached toward a method of translation known in the Soviet Union as artistic translation" (Leighton 16). Artistic translation approached the problem of untranslatability from a perspective which enabled it to conceive of problems as ones of language barrier. This allowed translators to concentrate on what should be done to convey a literary work from one language to another "as faithfully as languages permit" (Leighton 17). It was not only the "permission of the language" that was decisive in such an optimistic view of the possibility to overcome any language barrier; it was also an ideological push that encouraged translators to be more confident in their abilities to resolve any translation puzzle. The program that Soviet translation followed was very clear and determined: to identify the difficulties, try to resolve them and find appropriate solutions. All this was done with the enviable optimism and enthusiasm conferred by the ideological control inherent in the goals of the Soviet Union's program. There were four main principles that the Soviet school established: 1) acceptance of the notion of translatability; 2) considering the process of translation as a literary process not as a linguistic one; 3) viewing translators as writers which means that they deal with reality as well as with the text itself; 4) focusing on the process of translation as a main tool in creating an artistic work that would cause the same effect as the original did on the target audience (Leighton 14). However, there is a question of how these principles were actually utilized and accepted in cultural and linguistic Soviet discourse.

And, indeed, the most interesting and important question regarding Soviet translation's bond with the issue of censorship and ideological control still does not leave critics in peace. As translations were enormously important for the Soviet literary world, they were inevitably tied to the censorship that dictated the Socialist Realist Formula that all Soviet translators were bound to follow: "national in form and socialist in content" (Baer 36). Even though the censorship noose weakened by the end of 1970s due to the political agenda of "thaw" and subsequently glasnost, Soviet translations, until the fall of the "iron curtain," were still tasked with the struggle against bourgeois nationalism. In order to accomplish this, Soviet translators must have always been vigilant, careful not to be blinded by the apparent charm of a literary work lest they fail to realize that they might be introducing into their language "all the reactionary essence of a work. The translator must never forget his duty to the nationalities policy" or fail to remember that "his every mistake…can become a political mistake" (Baer 36). However, for some, translation became so called 'safe art' because they could elude censorship and let what was popular in European and Western works appear in the Soviet space. This was possible to accomplish due to the craft of the translators to transform or hide "forbidden" elements of the texts.

The question of politics and Soviet translation becomes more interesting when we consider the degree to which foreign literary works appear uncensored and unabridged in the Russian world, and more importantly the converse, when we note the ways and reasons that texts have been modified in the process of translation. This question can be easily explored by examining a Russian translation known to have

been significantly affected by political considerations in the early Soviet times (a period of harsh ideological control and persecutions) and it can come to some complications if we try to look at the translated works that were published much later, right before glasnost was proclaimed. If in the early translations the censorship was still very strong and rigid, the scholar working on comparison of the original and its translation could easily trace the possible gaps or silent moments in the translated text that were muted under the authority of the existing regime. It is more difficult to identify the presence of ideology and state control in much later translations as apparently there was an easing of the censorship ties with the coming of glasnost and freedom of speech that could create an illusion of complete change in the Soviet tradition of translation so thoroughly established by the Soviet school of translation and by other literary institutions. And maybe it is not the censorship or control per se that would be interesting for the analysis of the translated work of that period of time, but the political influence on translation in Soviet Russia. Some intriguing avenues of research include: how did translations of that time mirror the actual situation in Russia in those times, and did the translations still follow the pragmatic self-interest that could be beneficially used to further propagandistic goals or not?

2.1 Translation of Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* in the "Cannibalistic" Perspective

We have been intensively discussing the inevitable influence of the ideological apparatus in Soviet translation dictated by state control over the quality of words spread to the Soviet masses. While looking at the E. Korotkova's

translation of *Song of Solomon* we will stick to the metaphor of the cannibalistic practice of devouring as it can be associated with how the textual originality can be digested by the translator's intentions along with the whole ideological system that stands behind him/her. Indeed, the metaphor of cannibalism can symbolically reveal the true nature of the process of translation when it is determined by strict norms and regulations of censorship. The thing is that the process of translation completed under the conditions of the operating state control and straight ideological program can develop in two completely different directions. On one hand the translations' main strategy and purpose, the degree of its faithfulness to the original and the losses or gains that the translation experienced can become a result of a total textual devouring of original intentions and meanings. On the other hand, the translation can act as a 'friendly cannibal' that promises an 'afterlife' and survival for the novel in a Russian cultural and historical discourse after its digestion. In other words, it is interesting to see if the translation of this novel could manage to stay on a position to approximate the original, or it was impossible to prevent the absorption after an "I" of the translator went through original. Especially if this "I" concludes not only the individualistic reinterpretation of a translator but also the influence of the politics/ideology of the target culture? If the translator was a cannibal and she fed on the foreign text what are the possible consequences and effects after "the Other" has been digested?

The question of ideology and its influence on the process of translation has been one of the central issues for many scholars working in the sphere of translation. Thus, along with the universal understanding of the translation as an act of the

original's transmitting from a source culture into a foreign context where the translated text's success mainly depends on whether it is read fluently without having an impression that it is the translation but the original itself that mirrors the author's style and intentions it is certainly arguable if a translator really stays on a secondary position of a mere 'slave' of the 'master', if an "'original' is really eternal and translation dates" (Venuti 1992, 3). Indeed it is essential to realize that while 'translating' an original text into a foreign soil, a fluent strategy that a translator follows reflects the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text: as it is represented in a different cultural and historical discourse dominating the target language, it inevitably gets coded with foreign values, beliefs, and social representations. Once a translated text is placed in a different socio-cultural paradigm, it places the original itself into a different ideological arena. In other words, an original is unavoidably domesticated to a foreign context and acculturated to a foreign reader, "providing him or her with a narcissistic experience of recognizing his or her culture in a cultural other, enacting an imperialism that extends the domination of transparency with other ideological discourses over a different cultures" (Venuti 1992, 5). In other words, a foreign reader exerts enormous power over a translated text by appropriating the represented ideas in the understanding of their own culture through 'tasting' the other (original) culture.

Along with the complex relationships between an original text and the cultural context of a target language, there is also a question of what exactly happens when a translator deals with the original meanings/ ideas/and intentions. S/he arguably stays 'passive' and just transcodes an original into a different linguistic and

cultural dimension. His/her actions are reminiscent of the 'chewing, swallowing and digestion' of the original meaning and after that creation of a new textual formation that might only 'smell' and maybe 'taste' like the original, its forefather, and certainly causes reactions specific only to a target-language audience. By looking at the process of translation from this perspective, there is a definite temptation to connect this notion to the metaphor of cannibalism and analyze the strategies and goals of translation through the prism of 'devouring' 'digesting' the Other text in order to 'feel' or maybe 'taste' otherness, to appropriate it and come up with a new product that reflects the features of this Other along with mixing in the elements of 'the Self'.

The use of the metaphor of cannibalism introduces the notion of taboos and the violation of established norms and rules. If we consider translation as a cannibalistic act, then the taboo that a translator faces implies a prohibition against acting freely in original message appropriation and translating it in a way s/he decides to be the most appropriate or desirable one. Therefore, through cannibalistic translation, a translated text can claim its own right to be a new original text through first absorption of the meanings, styles and tactics from the source and further reconciliation of a translated work with the original.

When analyzing the Russian translation of Morrison's *Song of Solomon* through the prism of the cannibalistic act, it is important to determine how the translated text would react to the most common questions concerning the main principles of translation. By doing this, we try to identify whether the translated text stands in a position of great respect for the original (as it was claimed in the Soviet

school of translation) "which possesses a semi-sacred status, and so is worshipped from a distance" or if it takes a more active role of a transgressor who "develops a self-affirmative stance" changing the act of translation into a creative act that could be ideologically motivated in order to make the work more appealing to the Soviet readers not only because of the beauty of Morrison's language but also because of the actual themes touched on in the novel (Garnovsky 53). It does not actually mean that by taking this or that position translation should not (in the first case) or should (in the second case) be interpreted as a cannibal, both strategies can be already considered cannibalistic acts as the devouring of meaning and its digestion happen regardless a translation strategy. What it can tell is the extent to which the translated text has cannibalized the original and what is left at the end: an approximation of an original or its total imitation/adaptation, or is it a hybrid form that stands between a toleration and aggression in an original meaning appropriation.

The first question that I thought would be crucial to answer goes back to Jerome's first attempts to establish the status of translational studies and provide the process of translation with clear principles and guidelines to follow. The question is: what is the strategy of this translation? To translate "word-for- word" or "sense-for-sense"? (qtd. in Venuti 2005, 300).

Before giving an answer to this question, it is essential to mention that "word-for-word" translation definitely "shows a submissive nature of a translator" who praises the higher truth of the original" (Garnovsky 54). The "word-for-word" strategy was/is mostly applied in translation of religious texts or in the instances where the sacredness of the author is reinforced who is acting as a role of a "good-

little manipulator of men's lives" (55). However, speaking about the Russian translation of *Song of Solomon* which was accomplished in 1982, a crucial moment in a predemocratic Soviet Russia but presumably based on the main principles of the Soviet school of translation we might disagree that "word-for-word" strategy would be the one to follow. In the Soviet mentality, the foreign text must serve for common good and establish a tight connection with a target language audience that is possible to achieve only by bringing a foreign reader closer to the original, in other words by domesticating as much as possible an original idea and implementing it in a wider socio-cultural Russian discourse.

However, I contend, that translating Morrison "word-for-word" would be impossible. By doing this, there would be a vivid loss of her language's magnetism and colorfulness. The target language would seem 'ironed' and leveled to the Russian norms and standards of literary expression. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to stay aside of the original text by "worshipping it from the distance" (Guldin 111). Therefore, there is only one way – to grasp the meaning and that is by breaking the taboo of getting to a foreign territory and possessing or 'seizing' the originality. The translator preserves the text by feeding on the words and then 'ingurgitates' and enunciates them in the target language. The question remains whether a translator 'gets rid of' the author by choosing this tactic or still keeps an interactive mode of relationships with him/her.

My answer to the question of whether E. Korotkova follows "word-for-word" or "sense-for-sense" strategy falls into "sense-for-sense" option. E. Korotkova is performing her translation not aggressively but rather via a 'gentle' or 'friendly'

consumption of an intended meaning of the text. Even though E. Korotkova's translation is not distinguished by its aggressiveness and violent devouring of 'the Other', some parts of the translated text are resistant to the textual transparency which means that a foreign reader will not be able to restore the semantic, syntactic and grammatical structure of the source tongue. Examples of this inevitable absolute absorption of the original meaning can be seen in translating the speech of the main characters, which is marked by the nonstandard forms typical of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and by belonging to an African American community.

"That ain't her brother, Mama. They cousins". The older woman spoke.
"Он ей вовсе не брат мама. Они двоюродные"

"Same thing."
"Это все равно"

"No it ain't. Is it baby?"
"Совсем не все равно, верно, детка?"
…
"I mean what's the difference in the way you act toward'em? Don't you have the same way to both?"
"Я спрашиваю, есть ли разница в том, как ты относишься к своим и к двоюродным. Разве ты не одинаково к ним относишься?"
…
"Then why they got two words for it'stead of one, if they ain't no difference"?
"Ну, а тогда зачем понадобилось их неодинаково называть, если никакой разницы нет? "
(Morrison 1987, 44; Morrison 1982, 63).

In these few examples we can notice how the characters' speech is replete with AAVE forms: reversed word order and use of colloquialisms – all that marks the speech of the characters with a unique 'color'. The question is why E. Korotkova decided to stick to colloquial Russian speech in her translation, rather than adopt another form or variant of Russian that is also socially stigmatized. We suggest that if E. Korotkova chose one of the dialectic varieties of the Russian language then the

characters' speech would be marked with distinctive regional and rural differences which could mislead the Russian reading public and overly domesticate the original.

However, there is another nonstandard variant of Russian – vernacular Russian, or 'prostorechie' (which literally means the 'simple speech', or a speech of a 'simple person') that would probably be a better equivalent in this translational conundrum. 'Prostorechie' is considered as a substandard variant, as a divergent linguistic formation, mainly attributed to an urban illiterate person, one who is not familiar with the standard language. The main feature that AAVE and 'prostorechie' share is the decentralized position that they both held in the main language domain. However, the Soviet program of literacy proclaimed right in the beginning of the Soviet epoch labeled 'prostorechie' as a nondesirable variant which must be swept out of the standard and formal use of the Russian language. Thus, thinking of E. Korotkova's probable decision over the AAVE's equivalent could be the way to avoid the situation when the characters of the novel would speak a nondesirable, different from the standard (unified) variant of Russian.

Putting it into cannibalistic terms, E. Korotkova 'swallowed' all indicators of any possible deviation and came up with a new variant, where characters of the original would start to speak colloquial Russian, which is, even though different from the formal variant, but certainly more acceptable than 'prostorechie' form. As a result, the colloquial and loci tone of the characters' speech levels their African American-ness, so highly emphasized by Morrison to colloquial Russian-ness, universally accepted by the Soviet program.

As a result we find a very interesting textual hybridity created by E. Korotkova which was established in the result of a cannibalistic devouring and digestion of the original. (It is important to mention that I think that this choice to be either aggressive or passive in the process of an actual translation of these dialogues was not conscious as these moments reveal themselves in the textual reproduction and point to a single ultimate decision.) There is also another very interesting thing about this newly-born synthesis – the effect that these dialogues can have on a Russian reader: by making characters of the novels speak colloquial and illiterate Russian, E. Korotkova puts the original closer to the Russian readers and fully engages them in the narration, and maybe makes the readers put themselves in the place of "negroes from ghetto" (from the preface to the translation) suffering from the capitalistic regime that put them and their lives at the point where they were.

Along with the question concerning the method of translation, another, very controversial issue arises: the notion of fidelity. So, another question that we address is how Korotkova's translation is faithful to the original, or, following the idea of Nicolas Perrot D'Ablancourt: Is the translation ugly, but faithful, or beautiful but unfaithful? (qtd. in Venuti 2005, 256).

It was very difficult to answer this question as I could not identify where the limits of faithfulness are and at what point translation is considered to be unfaithful. I had a general impression that E. Korotkova's translation looks sometimes more colorful and catchy than the original. She achieves this by a very creative transformation of the simple and dry syntactic structures of the original into interesting combinations of word order in the translation. Also, by playing with the

meanings of words Korotkova manages to create a very interesting and beautiful narration which engages and catches the readers' imagination. However, there is a question: is such a 'free strategy' in modifying the original style considered "cheating" or, to put it in other terms, is it a necessary change that allowed Morrison's work to fit into the category of Russian novels written in approximately the same time period?

"One conquered when one has translated" (qtd. in Garnovsky 60). Obviously, the translation in this instance is not a mere observer of the original – but as Garnovsky describes it "an indication of sexual transgression. A manifestation of desire, an indescribable pleasure that the translator may not be willing to acknowledge openly" (60). This connection of transmitting of the original into a foreign soil with a hidden desire to 'taste' and 'get' a feeling of the 'otherness' through the breaking of the taboo barrier is certainly attributing cannibalistic features to the process of translation. In other words, the translator in this case rejects the metaphoric prohibition and becomes aggressively self-confident as s/he feels free in transforming a passive translated text into an act of hi/hers own artistic expression. Let's take for example the part from the translated text where the author describes the feelings that Ruth (mother of the main character) had while nursing her already grown-up son.

She felt him. His restraint, his courtesy, his indifference, all of which pushed her into fantasy. She had the distinct impression that his lips were pulling from her a thread of light…

В ней отзывалосьв се, что было в нем: принужденость, безразличие, вежливая покорность, - и воображение ее работало во всю. У нее было вполне отчетливое ощущение, будто он вытягивает из нее нить света... (Morrison 1987, 13; Morrison 1982, 32)

First, the translated text is different from the original by its wordiness and expanded sentence structures. Moreover, E. Korotkova's way of describing this scene is definitely more colorful and stylistically richer: the added epithets and the word choice make it sound very poetic and create imagery not so vivid in the original. Translation in this case gives a birth to "the mechanisms which crush the material of tradition with the teeth of a tropical sugar-mill, changing stalks and protective coverings into husk and cane syrup" (Guldin 115). This beautiful metaphor captures what happens in the process of translation of this exact episode and the original in general. It looks like E. Korotkova 'bites' the original and then describes her feelings while "chewing" it, how the original "tastes." It is important to mention that her description allows Russian readers to be very close to the original and 'share' the same feelings. In other words, E. Korotkova again 'devours' the original in order to transform it and absorb it. Therefore, the translation is definitely faithful in difference of this 'taste'.

Along with this notion, I would like to ponder the ideas of Margaret S. Peden on the possible method of deconstruction and further reconstruction of a meaning in the process of translation that can also find a certain resonance with a notion of cannibalism: "One must do violence before one can make beauty" (qtd. in Biguenet, Schulter 13). But we may go further and suggest that the initial goal of creating the additional beauty in translation could be interpreted as a natural response of optimistic attitude of the Soviet School towards translation as an art and translated work not as an imitation or copy of an original but as an autonomous literary creation reproduced in a different linguistic and cultural context.

Another question is: whether there is any purpose/ goal of accomplishing the translation? If yes, then what is it: to create an 'image'/ 'shadow' of an original and keep its national foreignness? (qtd. in Venuti 2005, 40) or maybe to provide an 'afterlife' for an original which will suggest its everlasting fame and survival? (qtd. in Venuti 2005, 56)? Or is it just to guide the reader but not show the whole mosaic picture of the original message and by doing this to create a new literary work out of the original? (qtd. in Venuti 2005, 67)? In other words, to what extent is the original digested and what are the consequences of that? Is there a purpose to the translation?

E. Korotkova's translation mirrors the artistry of T. Morrison to depict characters, their lives and personalities through the cultural, historical and political contextual fillers in the text. In other words, E. Korotkova successfully establishes an interaction between two texts/cultures and communicates an understanding of the foreign culture, "an understanding that in part restores the historical context of the foreign text – although for domestic readers" (Venuti 1992, 487).

However, the preface to the translation that we discussed earlier suggests the true purpose of this translation. Besides basic information about the author it has some other comments about the oppressed status of black people back in the times of slavery (blacks are called "Negros" in this work), about the devastating impact of capitalist regime on people's lives, their disconnection with ancestors and heritage: all of this makes an obvious connection with a probable purpose of this translation – to appropriate ideas in the original for possible Soviet cultural and political agendas. In this regard, translation embodies an act of critical appropriation of a probable intention that T. Morrison pursued in her work to subvert the power relationships and

deconstruct a notion of capitalism. It certainly could be utilized in a process of translation and introduced into a Russian soil as a perfect tool for ideological purposes.

In all the examples that I have discussed it is clear that the translation of *Song of Solomon* creates a certain dualism that establishes the unity of foreign and familiar, outer and inner, original and translation, central and peripheral. All these formations are inscribed in the text in the form of an active creative principle and reverse the idea of conclusive meaning. In this situation the translation absorbs both foreign and target sources and by doing this it nourishes from two resources: the source and target literature. The idea of 'nourishment' is connected to the degrees of foreign elements' absorption: complete, unifying synthesis or fragmented hybrid variants (Guldin 112). Korotkova's translation creates a rich hybrid of "unpacked" and "lost" behind the original textual elements that establish two-way flow between source and target cultures. In other words, in the case of the current translation, Korotkova is caught between the original and the target text. The question is still open as to whether it is possible to stay faithful to the original and suppress the hunger for the foreignness/otherness, or, alternatively, whether translation turns out to be an inevitably doomed cannibalistic act of the original absorption, its chewing and digestion (also under an ideological pressure in our case)? Certainly, while carefully analyzing the translation it is possible to find out what was 'eaten' and left behind the original or what is presented as a result of its consumption and further recycling in the process of translation. And it becomes obvious that Korotkova could not stay aside, she actively participated in the process of meanings/ideas'

appropriation and celebrated an autonomy of a translated text that can just mirror/reflect the originality in its transparent linguistic and contextual codes. In the next chapter we explore this dynamic through a translation of characters' names.

CHAPTER 3

THE RUSSIAN TRANSLATION OF NAMES IN TONI MORRISON'S *SONG OF SOLOMON*

Naming is a crucial stylistic and thematic component in almost all Morrison's works. Names help Morrison to disclose her characters' identities through the historical and cultural prism of their lives. Names, therefore, are not simple choices in Morrison's writings. Rather, they are carefully created constructs through which the reader can discover the deep roots of the African American legacy and trace the changes that it experienced in the context of American history.

The Russian translation of this novel, which necessarily must take into consideration all issues of ideology and a vastly different cultural and political environment lends itself to an investigation of Morrison's notion of naming in the Russian translational context. In his preface, Anastas'ev touches on the choice of names made by Morrison for the characters of the novel. The critic draws readers' attention to the "comic" use of biblical names and notes their "not necessarily religious utilization" in the content of the novel. Anastas'ev attributes their use to an underlying mythological purpose in the novel and suggests that they reflect the fate of their carriers in the capitalistic environment (Morrison 1982, 15). It is interesting

to study the Russian translation in light of the importance of naming. We will explore how the translation suffers from significant losses of meaning carried in the original by the deep underlying contextuality of names. Further, we explore how these losses disrupt the circular thematic and stylistic structure of the novel. In other words there is a big gap between the hidden cultural and historical background purposefully embedded by T. Morrison in her work through the names and the Russian variants suggested by the translator. The question we address is what might be the consequences of such a misrepresentation of (not only enigmatic and sometimes impossible to efface) Morrison's language along with the whole African American history and culture.

Therefore, in this chapter we look specifically at how the names from T. Morrison's *Song of Solomon* have been translated into Russian and how the choices made by E. Korotkova constrain possible interpretations for Russian readers. Put another way, how does a lack of any chance to stick to this or that interpretative mode of understanding the impact of characters' names lead to possible misunderstanding or simply ignorance of the underlying original impulses used by T. Morrison in her fiction, impulses that helped her to create a mysterious mosaic of themes and ideas interwoven with deep historical and cultural contextual concepts of self-identity, ancestral memory and communal ties? First, we consider the importance of naming in T. Morrison's fiction in general. Then, we will look briefly at the difficulties inherent in translating proper names and contemplate how this issue is challenging in the field of translation. And, finally, we analyze concrete examples of the Russian versions of the characters' names in order to accomplish an

analysis of their cultural and contextual trans-position from T. Morrison's textuality into the Soviet translational discourse.

3.1 The Role of Names and Naming in Toni Morrison's Fiction

In exploring the translation of names I attempt to identify where the translation fails to reveal the characters' images, leaving their possible interpretations ambiguous. I also presuppose how these distortions can influence the translation of foreign, in our case Western culture into another, Russian culture. I focus on the names that represent the most vivid distortions in translation from the original text into Russian. I outline the difficulty of transferring all possible connotative, symbolic and implicit connections that the names can hold in Toni Morrison's novel *Song of Solomon*. The analysis of the translation of names demonstrates the rupture in possible interpretations that the recipients might experience. The lack of "semantic and semiotic values of African names with ample evidence of spatial, temporal, religious, historical and gender diesis" can mislead the foreign reader "whose world view of the African culture and literary genre in question" would be greatly distorted (Bariki 55).

First, I look at the notion of naming in Toni Morrison's novels and identify its importance in the development of characters' identities in the presentation of African American culture to deconstruct the concept of authority and subvert all possible expectations of black culture in the discourse of an American novel. Then, I analyze the names of Pilate, Milkman and Guitar (protagonists of *Song of Solomon*) together with Sing Byrd, Dr. Foster and Henry Porter (characters who occupy a

secondary role in the narrative development). I argue that this analysis discloses what socio-historical-cultural connections elicited in the novel are lost in translation and what other possible interpretations they can evoke. I think it is better to omit names that have Biblical or mythological allegories in their meaning, because they are pretty semantically transparent and provoke close associations to those that the reader of the original text has. In the last section of this chapter I will analyze some of the examples of the Russian translation of proper names from *Song of Solomon*. My goal is to track losses and possible gains that the translation experiences and to identify what possible consequences a recipient from Russian culture could be left with and how it can be probably connected with a complex ideological environment where the translated work was published.

Why is it so important to pay attention to names while translating *Song of Solomon* or any other novels written by Toni Morrison? As Kathleen M. Ashley points out, Toni Morrison implements in her novel various "tricksters" – special language techniques – that help her to "maneuver the readers into questioning moral and social categories and to pose alternate possibilities for interpreting the world" (Ashley 270). One technique that Morrison successfully implements in her narrative to create new insight into the novels' motifs is naming. Why did Morrison decide to pay so much attention to the choice of names for her characters? How can mere nominations include such deep meanings that can be extracted only through scrupulous and careful reading? I think that one of the intentions that Morrison had is through choosing specific names for her characters to symbolically present the marginal segments of the African American society and to disclose their cultural and

historic identity in the Western society. By using "tricksters" in naming people, streets, geographical markers, Morrison provides a choice for the reader. The reader decides what meaning to extract and how to use it for interpretation. It is important to mention that it is not the choice itself that can seem challenging to a reader, but rather the openness to these alternatives that can conflict with conventional conclusions. Take for example the name of the main female protagonist - *Pilate*. She is "a trickster" that guides a reader to the deeper social violation of norms and values: "*Pilate* is a trickster-transgressor that ignores or deliberately violates social norms, especially codes or gender expectation" (Clayton 274). In other words, *Pilate* is not a randomly chosen name for one of Morrison's characters. The name is a complex semantic construct that leads to various interpretations the extraction of which requires the readers' constant involvement in the narration's development.

Explaining the importance of names in her novel, Toni Morrison herself stated the following: "The name thing is a very strong theme in a book that I am writing, the absence of a name given at all, the odd names and the slave names, the whole business, the feeling of anonymity, the feeling of orphanage" (Mackethan 186). Mackethan claims that names themselves define value in Morrison's novels, mainly due to their function of depicting and hiding knowledge and true identity. He argues that Morrison's characters are like orphans that fend for themselves, without a clear past and future. They are funny or strange names that were given to them and accidentally become the only clue in their search for self. Morrison's names bear witnesses that can tell the separate stories about their owners; they can also portray the individual treasure of selfhood and identity. When we encounter such names as

Milkman, Dead or *Guitar* they leave an impression of an accident or misunderstanding, but later we connect the names' meanings to the characters' life stories. Therefore, what is more important is not to figure out who got the power to give the name, but to find out the name true meaning. By doing this we can attribute the notion of power which it is beyond the notion of life itself (Mackethan 196).

Names in Toni Morrison's novels are highly symbolic and descriptive. They may contain some association with the place or the ancestry of the bearer, but they can also tell us about the history of African American society. That is what can be overcome but not forgotten. Obviously, names strengthen the fabric of the community and draw characters together and, therefore, create sense of community. Ruth Rosenberg mentioned that using this strategy of choosing the appropriate names for her characters, Morrison managed to "illuminate the chronicle structure of the narrative as a three-generational saga of a black family" (Rosenberg 127). Each generation presented a different mode of naming that showed the changing status of the African Americans within American society. Moreover, names indicate the self-image and chronology of how the position of African Americans changed during that time. The mystery of the name that has the inherited magic will be interesting to investigate for some future onomasticians as there are no limits for new interpretations or reinterpretations that can occur in future readings of this novel. Consequently, the symbolism inherited in Morrison's language can acquire new shades of meaning or evoke currently unknown interpretations that a future literary critic will take as material for his/her research.

As Wendy Harding and Jacky Martin wisely mentioned, Morrison's characters shape their identity when they attribute their names and accomplish the intention of the name-giver. This "trickster" helps the author create "all forms of ambiguity from the most superficial puns to more revealing ambivalences such as the ironically ill-fitting names of Peace, Wright and Dead families" (Harding 20). What is more, when Morrison's characters pick up names for themselves, they create something that will fully reflect their own choice that can become "provocatively leading *noms de querre* (Macon- makin' or make'em- Dead)" (Harding 21).

Taking into consideration the complexity elicited by the names in Morrison's novels, there can be a conundrum for a translator working with her writings: how to translate the characters' names: to transfer the conventional Western adequation of personality and patronym or to identify the existing links to the characters' identities; and find the appropriate equivalent that would somehow allow readers to see the character's identity projection by themselves. The translator's choice is not everything. However, there is a big question if the translator is actually able to put two completely unequal cultural domains closer to each other even if he/she attributes to a very careful and close reading of the target text.

3.2 Difficulties of Translating Proper Names

T. Morrison's *Song of Solomon* is a novel of names and a novel about the play of names. The deep semantic ambiguity of names makes the translation of meaning into a second language difficult, challenging and sometimes impossible to accomplish. Adrian Pable writes about the difficulties of translating proper literary

names from one language into another, and identifies what can happen if something is lost or added in this process. Some researches consider proper names to be untranslatable units that sometimes take a marginal position and are left for interdisciplinary research (Pable 503).

If a translator decides to create a new name it can "eliminate the cultural marker of the original text" (Pable 503). If he/she decides to leave names unchanged it shows the translator's decision not to "domesticate" the foreign element of the original. Therefore, the translator's decision depends mainly on whether the aim is to create a formal equivalent between the target and the source text or to focus on the receptor's response. The latter strategy is reasonable if one takes into consideration the fact that the recipient does not have the same socio-cultural and historical background as the target reader does. Nevertheless, I agree with Pable's opinion about the way the proper names should be treated by a translator: "each character must be permitted to have the same kind of personality that the author gave them in the original message" (Pable 506). The issue becomes crucial when the novel's unity and integrity depends on the preservation of all its essential elements and the names can be those jewels that a translator has to take care of very carefully.

Therefore, a translator faces a difficult task – he/she is "stuck with an onomastic double blind" and, in order to solve this dilemma, it is necessary to "possess an in-depth familiarity with onomasticon of the two cultures" (Pable 504). Obviously, the two names in the source and target texts will not function in the same way: an attempt to keep the equivalence on one level can result in a loss on the other. In other words, what is potentially possible to transfer from one language into

another can only be partially realized in onomastic translation because it is mostly culturally predetermined. Taking all the complexity of names' translation, a translator tends to chose one of the following:

> acceptability (the orientation towards the textual norms of the receptor culture) or adequacy (the maximum reproduction of the source text's functional features, regardless of the expectations of the prospective audience), with a series of intermediate positions and the possibility of inconsistent behavior in between (Manini 171).

It seems to be possible to achieve the right balance if we take into consideration the target text's linguistic specificity and its subjacent socio-cultural context with all of its implied concomitant interpretations that language can convey. However, what about the inconsistency in between behaviors and where they can lead a translator? What if a little "detour" leads us in a completely different direction on the way of the main message understanding? These cases are worth investigating as they show how translation can "manipulate" meaning transportation and its further interpretation.

The translation of names from Morrison's novels encounters double or even triple complexity, because a translator should think not only of how to convey the differences between cultures, but also how to keep the names' heritage and ability to witness the treasure of selfhood. In other words, a translator has to be fully familiar with the name's deep connection to its bearer's life, past and present and look beyond the frames of a novel, further to the time and place that the novel describes and to what place the characters occupy there. By choosing the variant of a Morrison character's name, a translator chooses the road sign that will lead a reader to the final destination. The question is if the reader of the text and the recipient of a translation

follow the same direction? And even if they are not following the same route, what is more important to keep in mind whether they are going to reach the same destination? In other words, it is interesting to look at how the reader is guided by the skillful hand of a translator who decides if a reader can see all views on this road, or if some parts are left invisible?

3.3 What Is Lost and What Is Gained

This section of our research is devoted to the comparison of some names from T. Morrison's *Song of Solomon* with the E. Korotkova translation into Russian in an attempt to identify what associations were lost and what might be gained by a reader from a different culture. I ask the following: does the equivalence of translated names have the same communicative-aesthetic value that can evoke reactions and feelings with the source readership? Is the translation of names an enslavement of Morrison's leitmotivs or their closest interpretation? Did E. Korotkova manage to re-create in the stream of T. Morrison's transnationalism a "unique and linguistic formulation" of names in the Soviet space or not (Garnovsky 56)?

We begin with translation of the name of *Milkman*'s best friend *Guitar Bains*. The reader learns that he was named "not cause I do play. Because I wanted to. When I was real little. So they tell me" (Morrison 1987, 45). His first name – *Guitar* – symbolizes , therefore, something that he was constantly deprived of and wanted to obtain. In the Russian version his name is rendered as *Gitara*, which is the semantically transparent word denoting a musical instrument. There is an additional

element to the Russian translation which is not part of the original: the ending *"a"* in Russian language denotes feminine gender. Thus, the name *Guitar* in Russian translation - *Guitara*- has grammatically feminine gender although it denotes a male character. I suggest that this 'cross-gender' functions to convey the implicit meaning of the impossibility of becoming who you really want to be, and conveys the lack implied in the original, albeit in a very different way.

The ambiguity of *Guitar*'s surname *Bains* creates a double entendre that can refer to the French word *bain* which means *bath* and could apply to his rebirth as a Sunday Man. It also phonetically coincides with the word *bane*, which refers to a person or thing that ruins or spoils (Hottges 126). However, in the Russian translation his surname is simply transliterated and, consequently, any possible associations of his name and character development in the novel are eliminated since 'bains' has no meaning in Russian. However, this loss is mitigated by the translation of *Guitar*'s second name *Sunday Man*. The Russian word for Sunday – *Voskresen'ye* comes from the word *Voskres* which means *has been resurrected* or *reborn again*. It is possible to suggest that the name of this character may be one of the most important in the novel as *Guitar* is an active member of the antiracism movement whose revolutionary initiatives are directed not only against unfair attitudes to black Americans but also against the system itself. That is why some losses and gains in the translation of his name might seem insignificant when first reading the translation, but in the process of close reading we see that it is crucial to see how *Guitar* is framed in the novel and what role he plays and what he might symbolize and what conceptual fields he might to activate for Russian readers. It is possible to

assume that if *Guitar* for T. Morrison represents a constant hope for a better future and possible change, for Russian readers he is a character without a certain identity (due to the confusion created with the gender identification of this name) and as a constant fighter for freedom and opportunity to "be born" again but in a new disguise. Therefore, the losses and gains, on the one hand, limit interpretations available to the recipients and on the other hand, give other shades of meaning that might evoke different feelings and implications in the different ideological and cultural context.

Sing Byrd – Macon Dead (Jake)'s wife, *Pilate* and *Macon*'s mother – got her unusual name because "white people name Negroes like race horses" (Morrison 1987, 56). Milkman did not know the name of his grandmother till *Circe* told him. Moreover, he grasped the true meaning of her name only after carefully listening to Solomon's song: *Sing Byrd* turned out to be a *Singing Bird.* This moment is very symbolic in Milkman's search for self, for his ancestry and connections to the story of his family. E. Korotkova chooses to translate the surname *Sing* with the imperative form of the verb "to sing" – *Poi*. The choice is equivalent to the original form and, therefore, like the original conveys the implicit goal of referencing to the oral form of the African American tradition. At first the name *Byrd* was transliterated in the whole novel. At the moment when *Milkman* hears the song in which *Byrd* turns out to be *Bird*. Korotkova switches to a literal translation of "bird" – *ptitsa* by making a note that *a bird* means *ptitsa* in English. Consequently, the Russian reader learns about the connection of *Byrd* to *ptitsa* only at the very end of the novel. However, in the original it is not that difficult to see throughout the novel a possible

link between *Byrd* and *Bird*. Such a translational discrepancy might disrupt an intertwined motive of *flight* in both literal and metaphorical meaning throughout the narration. The *flight* motive is central in the *Song of Solomon*. It symbolizes personal freedom and a way to get back to your roots, to your true identity, to your forgotten ancestry. I may suggest that one of the reasons why E. Korotkova decided to keep this theme not fully presented in the narrative is an attempt to create a feeling of an impossibility to accomplish this *flight*, to leave this character "caged" in her environment. Moreover, the initial choice not to translate, but just transliterate the name results in the loss of one more very important connection proposed by Morrison in her novel: the hybrid of Indian and African names. By mixing two cultures together the author points the reader's attention to their possible interrelation in the way they preserve traditions and keep the ancestry in their cultural and historical memory. In addition both Russian variants (in the beginning and at the end) of this name lack the rhythmical component that characterized the African-American tradition of naming and, therefore, the predominance of oral tradition over writing. Consequently, the privileged position of Western discourse that is deconstructed in Morrison's novel is transmitted in the translation and loses its initial conceptual purpose to portray the African American traditions of orality and memory preservation. Certainly, translation of this particular name is an extremely difficult and challenging task, but by neglecting all possible variants that could be used for the translating the underlying meaning hidden in this patronymic, the translator puts aside an importance of preserving all mentioned above themes touched by T. Morrison in the original. It is hard to say if this disconnection really disrupts

Morrison's textual image, but it certainly keeps the Russian readers' attention on the foreignness of the text. I would personally prefer to keep the sound associations created in the original between *Byrd* and *Bird* and try to preserve it in the translation. For example, the possible variants can be *Ptetsa* or *Ptita* where purposeful misspelling would still keep the closeness to the *Ptitsa* that can be heard, but not read. The preference to keep the foreign element in the novel can be explained by one of the major principles followed by the Soviet School of translation mentioned in second chapter: namely that major changes of the original were intolerable and impossible. However, it is sad to confess that this choice deprived Russian readers of numerous associations interwoven in the textuality of the novel.

Dead, the surname of several generations of an African American family portrayed by Morrison, has deep semantic and socio-cultural implications that have to be carefully transported into a different language in order to preserve the main message, the message that the *Macons* were spiritually, emotionally or psychologically *dead*. The Russian translation of this surname – *Pomer* – is the past tense masculine singular form of the verb *pomirat*' *(to die).* This verb is not very common in Russia nowadays (the more common verb for *to die* is *umeret'*) and is used mostly in colloquial speech. The choice of this word by the translator is thus interesting, and I suggest successful in the way that it transports the intention of denial of the written form in the African American culture. Certainly, the translation keeps the essential meaning connoted by *Dead* of being *not alive*. However, it is worth noticing that the translator chose a verb which denotes action whereas the original form of the name in English connotes a state of *being dead*. The slight, but

deep pragmatic and psycho-linguistic, difference between *being dead* and *to die* may not seem very noticeable at first reading, but after a more detailed analysis, the implications of the Russian version of this surname emerge associations of something that happened in the past. Thus *Pomer* literally means *he died*, thus conjuring, in comparison, the original name – *Dead* – which arouses ideas of being not alive as a constant state of both spiritual and emotional death. Moreover, it is a well - known fact that Russian is a language where word stress has great significance. The verb *pomer* has stress on the first syllable. However, when Russian readers first encounter the surname *Pomer*, they may not read it this way as the stress in Russian words tends to fall on the last part of the word. Since *Pomer* occurs as a name, connection to the verb form maybe not immediate. Consequently, Russian readers may be misled by the ambiguity of possible meanings of this name along with the confusion of how correctly they have to read it. I suggest that E. Korotkova by choosing a certain grammatical form for this name breaks the chronology that Morrison was trying to avoid, by leaving her characters in-between narrative by mixing past, present and future. It is also worth noticing that the choice of the colloquial verb to translate this name - *Pomer* - can carry a very specific role: to get Russian readers as close as possible to the characters of the novel and make them feel in the same way. In other words, if a Russian reader comes across a character with a last name which is awkward, that certainly can be used only in colloquial Russian speech, s/he would immediately start associating her/himself with this character and maybe even imagine what would happen to them if he/she found themselves in the same conditions. I would personally prefer a more translational

neutral variant - *Mertvii* (the adjective *dead* in Russian). This solution would, on one hand, avoid translation from unnecessary colloquial component and, on the other hand, could be more consistent with the meaning of spiritual rather than corporal death.

Milkman is the nickname that *Macon Dead* (III) got from *Freddie* after he saw him being nursed by his mother at an age when he was too old to be nursed. While it was perhaps a funny joke in the beginning, later it turns out to be the fate that predetermines his life and death. In an attempt to find out his real name, *Milkman* goes through the stages of "sucking nourishment and life from others" to the point when he embodies the role of a "provider, giving *Jake* his name and home" (Buris 147). This comment about *Milkman* as a "sucker" is clearly portrayed in the beginning of the novel in the way he treated *Hagar*, was isolated from his family, and was obsessed with finding his grandfather's gold. His nickname can also be interpreted as a symbol of immaturity, unreadiness for responsibility for his actions, inability to socialize and deal with other people. The Russian translation of his nickname, *Molochnik*, offers only the association of a provider (*molochnik* means a person who sells milk). The other meanings of a *consumer* and an *immature person* are lost. There is another Russian word that would have captured this side of this character's identity as a "sucker" – the Russian word *sosunok*. However, it does not transfer the meaning of a *giver*, the status that *Milkman* got at the end of his journey of his *identity search* and would evoke only the associations with a little, immature and inexperienced child. Therefore, there is a gap between the original text and the translation that restricts some of the most essential choices for a reader's

interpretation of *Milkman*'s name. Having been given a choice, the reader is left only with the variant provided by the translator (in my mind the most appropriate in this situation) and s/he loses some opportunities to cling to the true content of names which act as "dense signifiers that give clues about the destiny of a character or indications of the way the storyline can develop" (Bariki 50). In the case of *Milkman*, Russian readers are left in a space between the possible interpretations of meanings, their symbolic content and further connections with the socio-cultural context. I would suggest an alternate translation using a more neutral variant, an adjective *Molochnii* (adjective *milk*). This choice preserves some associations with fertility and fulfillment, and can be associatively transferred to the notion of breast feeding with a further metaphorical link to dependence and immaturity.

This critique of this name's translation should not imply that Korotkova failed in choosing a more appropriate variant. Rather it underlines the difficulty of preserving the same intercontextual meaning created in the original by Morrison. It is also interesting to indicate the possible motivation in making this particular choice. One might suggest that it diverts readers' attention from looking beyond the given name to its connection with the character's identity and his actual voice in the novel, and pushes them to perhaps pay more attention to other (more important) aspects of the novel, for example, *Milkman*'s search for self and family ties and impossibility to fully gain it as the society does not allow it. However, these are only suggestions of what could have been on the translator's mind while she was making this choice and there is only one fact that is evident, namely the obvious disconnections between

variants in translations with possible underlying interpretations of *Milkman*'s name embedded by Morrison.

In short, there is a question: does the loss in a translation "reduce the reader's appreciation of the function of such names" and diminish the impact of the message? (Bariki 52). I think that since *Molochnik* is not a mere transliteration, the Russian variant of the name still keeps most of its original implicit connotations. However, I must admit that a considerable part of the meaning is inevitably lost and can be made up only by the context and the reader's attentive reading. The interpretations that the recipient can come up with are limited due to the different semantic and cognitive field underlying the word of *Molochnik*. The conceptual content of this word includes the notion of giving, providing and supplying. Also, the link to the concepts of milk and farming gets the readers far from *Milkman* as an immature person, unready to take care of his family and beloved. Even though readers can get the additional meanings though the context and careful content interpretation, the name has lost the ambiguity elicited in the original text and is disconnected from motifs that could enrich the recipient's vision of the novel's message.

Pilate's illiterate father picked out her name from the Bible, because it reminded him of a tree that would protect the smaller ones. Such a random decision did not foretell how the chosen name would "act as a prophecy of the woman she would become" (Buris 150). The main role that she played in the life of the other characters was that of a *pilot (navigator, guider).* This play on words is not accidental in *Song of Solomon*. First, it underlines the predominance of the oral tradition in African American culture and the significance of knowing (keeping in

memory) over recognizing (ability to read). Also, it defines the true role of *Pilate* in the novel – the role of a "guider and educator" and of "a guardian of cultural and familial lore" (Buris 152).

The Russian translation *Pilat* is a biblical allegory used by the translator without any hesitation or doubts to demonstrate the same connection and subversion of any connections to the Bible that Morrison uses to portray in a novel to deconstruct the notion of the authority over written text by Western white society. However, the interesting fact is that the Russian translation does not make connections with the word *pilot* and instead choses a different word (and consequently, creates a different association) – the verb *pilit'*,which means *to saw*. The relevant passage is this:

- Вы хотите так его назвать?
- Я хочу назвать так ребенка. Прочитайте.
- Да нельзя его так называть.
- Прочитайте.
- Это мужское имя.
- Прочитайте.
- Пилат. Вы написали тут: Пилат.
- Это вроде бы тот, кто пилит?
- Нет. Ничего он не пилит. Пилат, который убил Христа, вот это кто... (Morrison 1982, 37).

"You want this for the baby's name?"
"I want that for the baby's name. Say it."
"You can't name the baby this."
"Say it."
"It's a man's name."
"Say it."
"Pilate. You wrote down Pilate."
"Like a riverboat pilot?"
"No. Not like no riverboat pilot. Like a Christ-killing Pilate…" (Morrison 1987, 19).

This crucial shift occurs in the last two lines. Where Morrison's original references the "riverboat pilot," the translator reads: "So someone who saws?"

Despite the fact that there is a Russian word *pilot* (English *pilot*) that could arouse the same associations of a guide or a shepherd that could be successfully used by a translator to attribute the certain meaning to *Pilat*'s name, the translator chooses instead to put her name together with the verb *pilit'*. Therefore, there is a loss of the link between *Pilate* and a *guide* that could call for obvious interpretations of the influence *Pilate* left on *Milkman*'s fate. What is preserved is the connection of *Pilate* with nature and trees in particular because the verb *to saw* evokes the first associations with *sawing wood*. I suppose that this disconnection leads to further possible misinterpretations as *to saw* can also be linked to the concept of *separation*, *breaking apart*. Meanwhile, *Pilate* represents the keeper of memory and knowledge, the connector with African American heritage and history. Her presence in the novel symbolically represents a link between past and present, a link that connects all three generations of the *Dead* family to ancestors and future generation. She is a *pilot* of the plane that will never fly but instead help others to find their way to the bottom of their true identities. The Russian variant of the verb *to saw* puts *Pilate* on the ground, close to nature and trees far away from the motif of flying – something that she would never be able to accomplish. The translation of this name is the second case when the flight theme is jeopardized in the translation. Recall that the translator does not opt for a literal Russian translation of *Byrd/Bird*. I contend that the translator's choice not to unpack foreignness of *Byrd* and *Pilate*'s association with a *pilot* caused a series of disconnections with Morrison's implicit message that her characters already 'know' themselves through their names, and what they have to do is just listen to it carefully. On the contrary, confusion created in the translation

diverts the Russian reader's focus from the continuity in the novel's narration. The translational strategy perfectly coincides with an idea expressed in the preface by Anastas'ev about the incapability of the main characters of this novel to get to the true selves, to their true identities. He explained it in the context of capitalism that, to his opinion, "promotes individualism and monetary relationships rather than spiritual growth or desire to keep the family ties" (Morrison 1982, 10).

I would also like to point out one more similar (probably also purposeful) disconnection that the translation experiences, namely the translation of the name of the street where Pilate lives - *Darling Street*. As Buris mentions, Morrison deliberately attributes to this name a positive connotation, as *Pilate* will play a great role in *Milkman*'s life. Also, it can be ironically connected with *Milkman*'s and *Hagar*'s relationship or act as a contrast to *Pilate*'s brother's house on *Not Doctor Street*. "Pilate was one who could fly without leaving the ground and even the name of the street she lives on and the house she lives in reflect the personality" (Buris 134). *Darling Street* is another "trickster" that Morrison uses to disclose aspects of *Pilate*'s character and the significant place she occupies in the novel. In speaking about the street where she lives we can talk about the physical space that she possesses and the place that was so dear to everybody in the novel. Therefore, *Darling* is not a mere name, it is a complex capturing of the other characters' attitudes to *Pilate* and a reflection of her personality.

In the Russian translation, *Darling Street* is merely transliterated and, therefore, there is a loss of any possible connotative associations that the author was trying to imply. The context can certainly compensate for this disconnection and, in

the flow of narrative, it becomes clear that *Darling Street* is the place where all members of the *Dead* family feel good, peaceful and harmonious. However, what is lost is the "self-referentiality of Tony Morrison's names that protects integrity of her fiction. It can be explicated in its own terms, not on ours" (Rosenberg 26). In other words, what is lost in Morrison's language interpretations can cause the destruction of the narrative unity and its circular nature. The distorted translation of the name of the street leads to the break of the chain that connects *Pilate*, *Milkman* and other members of the *Dead* family. Thus, Russian readers cannot get an image of *Pilate* who is not the pilot who lives on a street and the disconnected elements of the novel do not seem to be integrated with one thematic and contextual net.

The translator's choice for other characters' names is also important, as these characters are also essential elements of the textual integrated structure of the novel created by Morrison. Thus, the name of *Dr. Foster* was meant to create the foil to the real contribution that *Dr. Foster* performed for the African American community. Rosenberg mentions that in a reverse understanding established by Morrison, *Foster* did not foster his people and his community in the sense of bringing, nurturing, and promoting the development or growth of; to encourage; to nurse; to cherish (Clayton 156). In other words, this name again invites other socio-cultural interpretation that goes beyond simple nomination and attribution to the character of this novel. *Dr. Foster* is one of many that represent the lost generation in the novel. *Foster* was forcefully taken from the historical roots of the African American culture and went through *Westernization* that tore apart all possible connection with ancestral heritage. The Russian variant is a simple transliteration of his name that limits all associations

and possible interpretations that could lead to deeper understanding of the message conveyed in the novel. What remains in the space between the translation and the original is the idea of "the image of self is the image of community; self is community, and community is self" in Morrison's novels (Cooper 28). The representation of self in Morrison's novels also challenges the individualistic vision of this notion as it is a part of a community. Morrison shows *Foster*'s inability to become a fully-fledged member of the African American community as he forgets his historical roots and betrays ideals in the search for materialistic gain. For Russian readers *Foster* remained another American with a regular foreign name without any probable link to the notion of self and community relationship. I suppose that a well-chosen name for this character could be beneficial for some probable propagandistic purposes elicited in the translation, and it remains uncertain why some names were translated keeping in them the main lexical meaning of the words (like *Milkman* or *Sweet*) while others were kept foreign through translation as mere reminders for the Russian readers that they are reading translation.

Henry Porter is a member of the organization Seven Days and *Corinthians*' lover. His name is also loaded with underlying meaning and reflects the role that he plays in the novel. One of the meanings of the word *porter* is *a person, whose employment is to carry heavy burdens*. He fulfills this role and "personifies his name when he carries burdens; he carries a burden of membership in the Seven Days and carries the burden of liberating Corinthians from her Dead life" (Buris 161). Also, in African American culture the meaning of the word *porter* can imply a person who carries a burden of slavery, poverty and hardship but in Morrison's vision the

Porter's mission is defiantly sacred. The ambiguity of his name is disclosed through the way his poor life went together with the missionary function that he fulfills in the novel. In the Russian translation his name is simply transliterated and any links to the content of his name, to the representation of the members of the African American society who took the role of saviors are lost. Thus, *Porter* is transliterated from the source language into the target language and transformed from an intricate and equivocal nominative formation into a foreign name that has a mere referential function and leaves the recipient without any even probable associations of this name with his identity and what he represents in an African American community of his generation.

The analysis of the translation of names in T. Morrison's *Song of Solomon* reinforces, first of all, what a crucial role names play not only in the organization of the narrative, but also in the representation of the socio-cultural African American discourse in Soviet space. It also questioned the decision making process in the novel's translation, the principles that prioritized the translation's goals and strategies and the possible influence of censorship and ideological control. Thus, despite the fact that the translation in general was done in a very competent fashion doubt remains as to whether the translation really resolved the peculiarities of a different (African American) national identity with all the underlying local, regional and global contexts embedded in the original, and if it was really Korotkova's intention to do so. Based on this analysis, it is clear that the translation of some of the key names of the novel's characters was disconnected from associative and symbolic meanings of the original textual structure. This disconnection possibly eradicated any

chance for further interpretation by the Russian reader due to either the names being simply transliterated or by choosing variants that do not fully satisfy the images created by Morrison. We are left with the question what might influence the translator's choice to transmit some names untouched with an inward foreign element, while others were translated with colloquial shades of the Russian language? Is this misbalance a purposefully and ideologically motivated? The Russian translation of characters' names misses the deeper social-cultural associations that might better illustrate the African American culture to a Russian reader. However, maybe it was deemed not really important to portray an African American culture in all possible colors? Maybe the translation's goal was to pay more attention to the novel's themes that might be very influential for the Soviet reading public. Thus, the connectivity and circular development of the narrative where all elements (including names) are interconnected, which is one of the mechanisms that Morrison used to unpack the characters' identity, was negated/unfulfilled in the translation. *Guitar Bains* was separated from his "resurrection stage" and got instead transgender status in the Russian translation. With transliteration of *Byrd* there is an eradication of the central flying motif and erasing African American and Native American links that Morrison is trying to promote. In the Russian translation, the *Dead* family *died* in the corporal world whereas they are spiritually *dead* in the original text. *Milkman* lost his immaturity in translation and was left with a meaning of only "a provider." *Pilate* did not become a naval pilot or navigator but rather a woodcutter, that instead of evoking a connecting function, got rather the association with someone who splits and separates. *Dr.*

Foster and *Henry Porter* were transliterated into Russian without trans-sharing their underlying connections of their names to the indented functions they had in the novel.

Returning to the metaphor of "cannibalism" which we suggested a general overview of *Song of Solomon*'s translation, the notion of untranslatability is very crucial. The deconstruction of the foreign by chewing, swallowing and digesting arises from the constant interchange between original and target texts. Implementing of new elements into a different discourse leads only in part to complete absorption, "as some foreign elements are simple irreducible to the logic of the assimilating body" (Guldin 116). Obviously some untranslatable elements will always remain alien through which the origin will be seen. Also, they will trigger new attempts at their digestion. That is why untranslatability is crucial in cross-cultural interaction and building a two-way tight alliance in-between original and target texts. For this reason a translator should perhaps not be afraid to 'lose'/ leave something not 'digested' as these moments of resistance can motivate new "destabilizing developments within the absorbing body" and keeps the process of translation going (Guldin 117). Each translation is thus never a final destination but only another stage of an open-ended journey for other literary creations. However, in the case of *Song of Solomon*'s names' translation, the moments of not complete translatability may well lead to a major disruption of the transnationalism established by Morrison in her fiction. And, presumably in the environment of the Soviet School of translation this could be done according to a certain propagandistic agenda or under particular ideological control. In this condition the propriety could be taken by reflecting on the

major themes touched on in the novel, especially if these themes can be usefully used in the propagandistic apparatus and certain elements of the style and narrative strategies of the novel are neglected or put aside from the scene.

CONCLUSION

Our research reveals how the original text of a translated work might change when the ideological agenda of the receptive culture is "using" works of art for its political and propagandistic purposes. Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* can be an example of a literary work that is utilized as an element of socialist propaganda to elevate the values and morals desired in Soviet reality which expose the capitalistic regime as an oppressing mechanism that breaks down connecting ties between an individual and the his/her community, heritage, Self. The Russian translation of T. Morrison's *Song of Solomon* is both challenging and controversial for analysis. The year 1982 when the translated version appeared in the Soviet Union, was a transitory time period characterized by rapidly changing social and political settings. Censorship had been weakened by then and the presence of any ideology and propaganda is hard to trace in translations published in that time. However, while analyzing the translated text of *Song of Solomon* we come across indicators of a possible hidden ideological influence interwoven with Soviet discourse of translation. Thus, there is a certain connection between the clear propagandistic agenda in the preface to the translation and the very sparse and unclear information about the translator's personality itself. Along with this, we notice a "cannibalistic" tendency of the translated work to "devour" and "absorb" original textuality in cases

of untranslatability or stylistic predominance of the Russian literary tradition over the original (Morrison's) way of writing. This project focused on the translation of the characters' names as their translation unpacks implicit (or lost) elements of the original text. We proposed that disconnection between the translation and the original might reflect possible outside influence on the process of translation of this novel.

Certainly, it is quite dangerous to draw any conclusions about the possible reasons for why E. Korotkova adopted particular translational strategies as we cannot know what exactly the translational agenda was for E. Korotkova when she was working on this novel. However, we might consider the whole complex of co-independent elements within which the translated work appeared in the Soviet Union and which could have a huge impact on a final result. These elements are the influential principles of the Soviet School of Translation, an ideological control with a propagandistic intention to stress those elements of the translated works that would reinforce the positive attitude to the socialist system and undermine capitalism. Also, the time (1982) when the novel was introduced to Russian readers might be considered a prefiguration to a crucial moment in the Russian history when there was a radical change of the political and social system of the country. The analysis of the *Song of Solomon*'s translation showed that the Russian version occupies a space between the old Soviet traditions of translation with a dominant propagandistic element and a new way of interpretation with an attempt to transport Morrison's motives from still "closed" Western reality to the changing Soviet space. Thus, the preface occupies a more central position in the translation than the role of E.

Korotkova does. The clear explanation of Morrison's underlying intentions to subvert the power relationship in the capitalist society and show the real life of the African American community is the priority, whereas the position of E. Korotkova herself. The lack of any comments or any notes about her experience with translating T. Morrison are neglected. Therefore, the absence of any information and access to the process of translation let us suggest how the hidden ideologically purposed mechanisms could have influenced the decision making process in translating this work. We also presuppose how lost, unexplained, or neglected elements of the original could reflect not the weakness of the translation but the strength and power of the ideological apparatus that stand behind. Indeed, the optimism of the Soviet School, that any translational problem can be addressed with a certain solution, raises the question of what actually is considered as a translational problem in Soviet translation. Is it style or language of the original that makes it difficult to keep the translation faithful to the source text, or is it the original's peculiarities that make it complicated not to domesticate the message to the target context, or is it a problem of adaptation of the key themes of the original to the desired politically/ideologically charged reality of a receptive culture? We suppose that Soviet translators along with the Soviet mechanism of censorship and state control were really successful in completing the latter one. The former two translational challenges seem not as important and, therefore, were most of the time dismissed or not taken seriously by translator.

Focusing on the translation of names we noticed some inaccuracies/ disconnections and possible losses that, on one hand, disrupt the narrative continuity

of the original and, on the other hand, suggest the real (implicit) reasons for the translator's choice. The character and place names in Morrison's fiction are not mere denominations, they are complex constructs of underlying cultural, social even political context interwoven in the narration along with the true characters' identities, their heritage and ancestry that their owners bear. One question remains: why for some names did E. Korotkova use transliteration, while for others she provided a literal translation (without considering existing difference between English and Russian reception of these variants)? Why some were partly transliterated and partly translated? The resulting confusion reveals both a lack of a unified translation strategy used for proper names in this novel and a distribution of priorities in this translation, which again might have been ideologically motivated.

The fact is that E. Korotkova's translation remains the only Russian translation of this novel. It would be interesting to see how the translation strategy might change if *Song of Solomon* were to be translated in the current conditions of a democratic Russia. What role would the translator take in this process and what would be prioritized and what would be neglected? We can only suggest how Toni Morrison's works can be interpreted in different cultural/ political/ideological settings. However, it is obvious that the transnational nature that all Toni Morrison's fiction possesses can let us again and again return to her writings and redefine many issues in the context of new time, new reality.

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